

The Hub: unleash the Mozart within

A U S T R A L I A N

Macworld

NOT A COMPUTER?

Why the iPhone is more
than Steve Jobs thinks it is

TAME THE WEB

Tips and tricks to make the
most of your browsing



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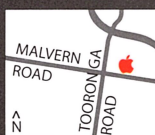
Melways: 2F B10



Melways: 69 4E



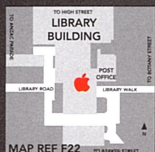
Melways: 2L J8



Melways: 59 F7



Melways: 452 B5



UBD: 256 P15

iPod Trade-ins

Feel like a new nano? Wanna super-size your mini? Computers Now accept trade-ins on working iPods (except shuffles). The screen can be cracked, the battery performance poor, the headphones faulty. As long as the iPod plays music, we'll give you \$75 trade-in off any new iPod purchase. Ask our sales staff today.

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Apple iMac Computers

Apple iMacs now come standard with the new super fast Intel Core 2 Duo processors. You can run Windows software at native speeds with the Bootcamp or Parallels options. Software includes Mac OS X 10.x, iMovie HD, iPhoto, iDVD, GarageBand, iWeb, iTunes, 3D Games, Front Row, PhotoBooth & more!

17" 1.83GHz Intel 512/160GB \$1530
24 x Combo, GMA950 graphics

17" 2GHz Intel 1GB/160GB\$1830
8 x DL S/Drive, Airport & Bluetooth

20" 2.16GHz Intel 1GB/250GB..\$2275
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Add Bootcamp & Windows XP ..\$295



Apple Laptop Computers

All Apple Laptops now come with Intel Core 2 Duo Processors and lots of bundled software!

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Intel 512/60GB, Combo Drive-White

13.3" MacBook 2GHz\$2075
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17" MacBook Pro 2.33GHz ...\$4350
Intel 2GB Ram/160GB, DL SuperDrive



NEW MacPro Workstations

The new Mac Pro is Apple's work horse computer for commercial and professional users. Powered by Quad Core Intel Xeon processors at speeds of 2.0, 2.66, or 3Gz. Internal hard drive storage of up to 2TB.

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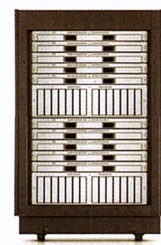
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16 x DL S/Drive, GeForce 7300 GT

Quad 3Ghz Intel 1GB/250GB ..\$5250
16 x DL S/Drive, GeForce 7300 GT

Apple 20" Cinema Display.....\$1145
Widescreen. Native 1680 x 1050 resolution.

Apple 23" Cinema Display.....\$1595
Widescreen. Native 1920 x 1200 resolution.

Apple 30" Cinema Display.....\$3190
Widescreen. Native 2560 x 1600 resolution.



Apple Premium Xraid Storage

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Xserve RAID 3.5TB.....\$13489
Fibre Channel 7 x 500GB drives

Xserve RAID 7TB.....\$21499
Fibre Channel 14 x 500GB drives

Apple Xserve: Quad Core Intel

Apple Xserve 2GHz 1GB/80GB\$4999
Quad Core Intel Xeon 'Woodcrest' Proc.



Apple Software Packages

Mac OS X v10.4.6 "Tiger"\$175

iLife 06\$109

iWork 06\$109

.Mac Membership - 1 Year.....\$130

Final Cut Studio 5.1\$1829

Final Cut Express 3.5.....\$415

Remote Desktop 3 (10 User).....\$389

Remote Desktop 3 (Unlimited).....\$679

Aperture 1.1\$429

Logic Pro 7.2.....\$1339

Logic Express 7.2\$469



Fuji Xerox Printers
Thinking Printing

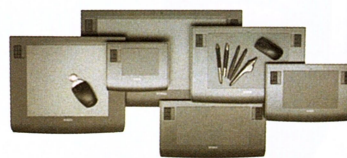
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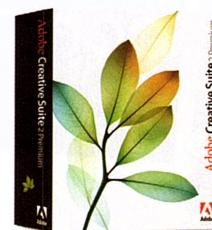
21" LCD Graphics Tablet/display. Draw on the actual LCD display for instant feedback and accurate viewing. Demonstrations available.....\$3795

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Adobe Photoshop CS2

Upgrade from any full version of Photoshop version (not LE or Elements)\$319

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QuarkXPress Version 7.01

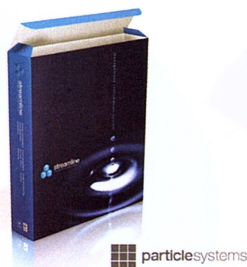
QuarkXPress Version 7 is a powerful layout program with an intuitive, versatile interface that lets you combine writing, editing, and typography with colour and pictures to produce dynamic final output.

QuarkXPress is widely used by magazines, newspapers, advertising agencies, typesetters, printers, corporate publishers, design firms, catalogue houses, book publishers, and form designers. Now in universal binary format. Version 7 adds many new features such as smart transparency, job jackets, shared content, composition zone technology, enhanced tables plus much more.

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Canon Large Format Printers

Canon's new range of large format printers produce stunning photographic quality prints or banners in widths of 17" to 60". Canon's unique Lucia pigment inks provide excellent colour stability and durability and the 12 colour models include Red Green and Blue inks for a greater colour Gamut and have both the matte black and photo black inks loaded at the same time, eliminating waste from swapping cartridges. YES, we will match or better other prices.

Canon iPF500 17" 5 Colour\$2750

Canon iPF5000 17" 12 Col\$3195

Canon iPF600 24" 5 Colour ...\$3995

Canon iPF700 36" 5 Colour\$5195

Canon iPF8000 44" 12 Col\$9450

Canon iPF9000 60" 12 Col ...\$26500



Epson Large Format Printers

Epson's UltraChrome K3 Inks are now available on a wide range of printers from A4 up to a massive 44" wide. Epson Printers are particularly well suited to the digital proofing and photographic markets, and their inks are stable and have a long life. Special pricing is shown below and they all come with a free roll of media. Designwise and Graphics Plus are two of Australia's leading Epson Large format resellers. We will match or better other quotes for Epson Large Format Printers.

Epson Photo R2400 A3 8 Col...\$1750

Epson Pro 3800 17" 8 Col.....\$2170

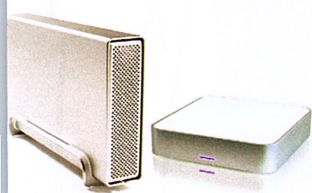
Epson Pro 4800 17" 8 Col.....\$2995

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ceCube II 750GB (as above)\$885

Dual Bay Sata Xpress 640GB\$625

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Stardom SR3610 1.5TB\$2150

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Stardom SR6600 2TB\$3950

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Stardom SR6600 3.75TB.....\$6100

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LaCie 250GB FireWire External HD in Porsche P3 Casing\$259

LaCie 1000GB 7200rpm d2 BigDisk USB2.0 & FireWire & F800\$985

LaCie 80GB 2.5" 5400rpm Red Brick casing USB2.0 & FireWire.....\$259

LaCie 120GB 2.5" 5400rpm Blue Brick casing USB2.0 & FireWire.....\$345

LaCie BIGGEST RAID 1.6TB 4X400GB HD USB2.0 & FireWire 800\$2379

LaCie BIGGEST RAID 2TB 4X500GB HD USB2.0 & FireWire 800\$2949

LaCie 319 with Hood + Blue eye Pro 19" LCD monitor with hood\$1749

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DC07

DESKTOP **CREATE!** AWARDS 2007

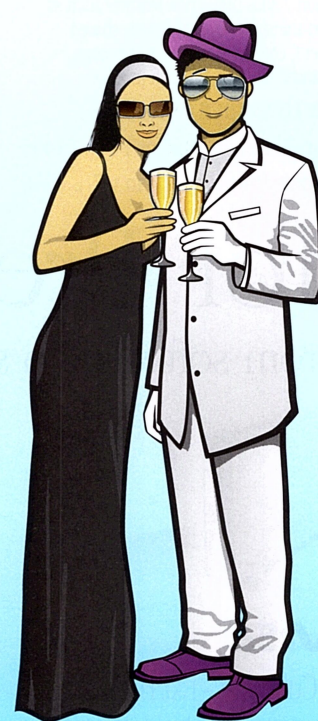
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OF THE YEAR



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SHORTLIST. A selection of the entries received throughout the year will be short-listed by our editorial and design team, and published in the awards section of *Desktop*.

All published entries then become finalists in the awards. Based on 2006 we expect a large number of entries and will be selecting only a limited number each issue for publication. **JUDGING.** In mid July 2007, the shortlisted entries will be judged by a panel of respected industry professionals, supporting partners and representatives from education. Key criteria in all categories will be: effectiveness of communication, fulfilment of brief, quality of craft, effective use of budget, originality, and innovative use of medium and materials. The winners of each of the 8 categories will then go into the running for the 2007 Jupiterimages Designer of the year. **PRIZES.** As well as receiving an award and having your work published in *Desktop* magazine, winners of each category will receive a cash prize to the value of \$3000 from the category supporting sponsors. The Jupiterimages Designer of the year will receive an additional cash prize of \$5000. **THE FINE PRINT.** Entries in all categories (except Student Portfolio) must be projects commissioned between January 2006 and June 2007. You may submit up to five entries.

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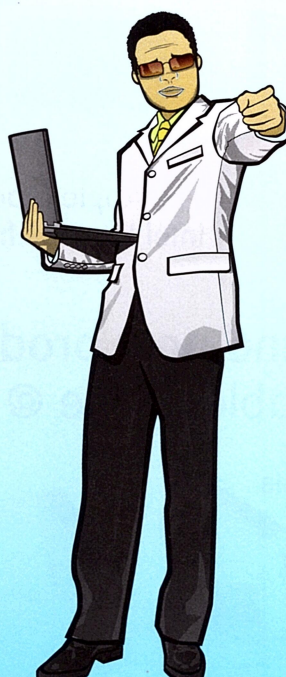
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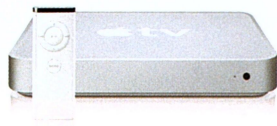


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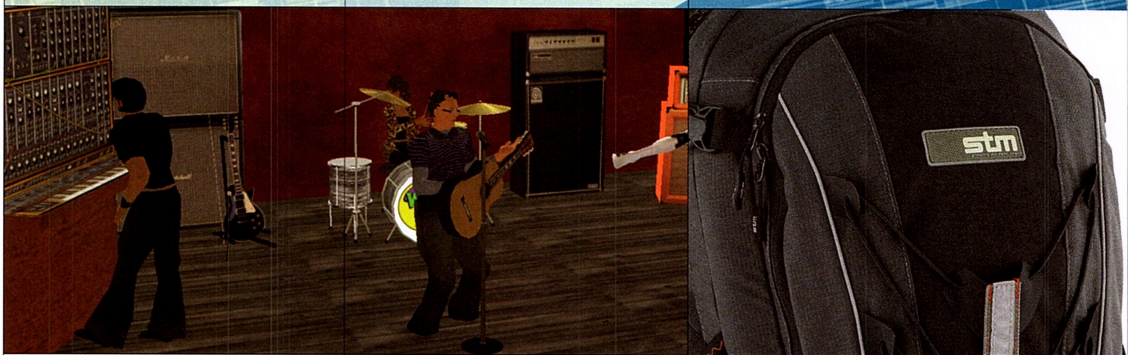
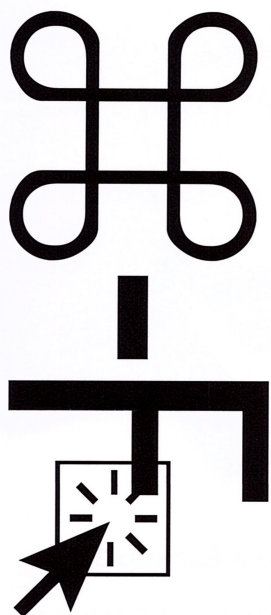


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Focus.

032

Decode the web

By Sarah Milstein and Kirk McElhearn

With our tips for searching the net more effectively, using your browser more efficiently, and taking advantage of RSS to get information fast, you can zero in on exactly what you're looking for without wasting time.

The Hub.

Music.

045

Writing music on your Mac

Mobile.

050

The best laptop bags for back to school

Video.

052

Modular camcorders in your future

Photo.

054

Pro File: Yervant, wedding photographer

How to.

Customise your DVDs

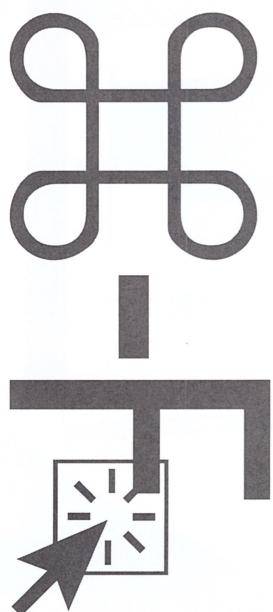
058

Outside the template

Help folder

060

Queries and tips from our readers



Buzz.

San Francisco Macworld Expo 019

There were no new Macs announced at Macworld — or were there? Jobs unveils a media-streaming server built on OS X and a phone/iPod/organiser/revolutionary instrument built around a mobile version of OS X. For a company that's just dropped the word "Computer" from its name, Apple seems to be making a lot of computers.

Also: Adobe swings back into Mac video.

Interface.

Commentary 012

Mailbox 015

Off the Net 028

InSight 030

NetWorth 042

Education 057

ReadMe 064

Soapbox 082

Test drive.

Epson Stylus Photo RX590



Canon PIXMA MP960



HP Photosmart C7180



Brother MFC-665CW



AMW lab: Multi-function photo printers 067

Picture perfect

Apple Backup 3.1



Retrospect Desktop 6.1



Intego Personal Backup X4 10.4.5



Prosoft Data Backup 2.1



Tri-Backup 4.0.4



Backup software 070

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076

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From the Macintosh scene to the magazine.

By Matthew JC. Powell.

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Apple Inc.

Not a computer?

STEVE Jobs said a weird thing near the end of his Macworld Expo keynote address in San Francisco. In explaining the reasoning behind changing the company's name to "Apple Inc." instead of "Apple Computer Inc." as it has been for 30 years, he said: "The Mac, iPod, AppleTV and iPhone. Only one of those is a computer." I beg your pardon, Steve?

AppleTV, simple appliance though it may be, is doing some very sophisticated processing. It's got a CPU, it's got a hard drive, it's got RAM, it's got an input device and it's got output interfaces. It can communicate with other computers over a network. It can find data that it is capable of sharing on those computers. It can differentiate data that it is not capable of sharing.

To say nothing of the fact that it can take reams of 1s and 0s and turn them into music, photos and movies on your TV screen. All of this using an operating system based on Mac OS X.

By any reasonable definition of "computing", what the AppleTV does is computing. That, in my eyes, makes it a computer.

(Incidentally, the name of the product is actually "AppleTV", but I just think that's dumb. Like when Prince started calling himself Mr Squiggle or whatever it was — you know, that symbol thing. I kept calling him Prince and I'm going to keep calling AppleTV AppleTV.)

Then there's the iPhone. It, too, runs OS X, just like a Mac. Like a Mac, it runs Dashboard widgets. Like a Mac, it can connect to WiFi networks. Like a Mac, it can pair with other devices using Bluetooth. Like a Mac, it can send and receive e-mail, and browse the web. Like a Mac, you can use it to organise your contacts, manage your calendar, even to some extent write using a magic keyboard that appears from nowhere when you gesticulate at it (I occasionally find myself gesticulating at my Mac — like when I get that spinning beachball — but with the iPhone, gesticulating will actually affect the device while my Mac seems oblivious).

It would be pretty hard to allege that an iPhone is a fully-fledged Mac. I very much doubt that we'll see it running Photoshop (and I doubt that anyone wants to). I have to say, the idea of mobile versions of iLife and iWork kind of intrigues.

But, by any reasonable measure, an iPhone is a computer. You could even mount a reasonable argument that, since it runs OS X, it's a kind of Mac. Much has been made of the fact that there was "no Mac announcement at Macworld," while I would argue that there were two. Certainly you can expect to see coverage of AppleTV and iPhone in future editions of *Australian Macworld*.

I want to know, for example, whether you can stream videos from the iPhone to your TV via AppleTV. Even though none of the devices involved would have the word "Mac" on the front, Mac technology would be intrinsic to the process. As soon as I can find out, I'll tell you.

Notice that I didn't say too much about the iPhone's multimedia capabilities above. That's because it's unclear, at this stage, whether the component of the machine that's handling that is more iPod or Mac. The iPod, of course, has a processor, and it has storage, and it has RAM, and it has an operating system. It can reasonably be called a computer (and the lunatics who hack it to run Linux would definitely say it is).

The iPod is not, however, a Mac. Which brings me to my next point.

Whatworld? I recently received this letter from reader John Feltham, from Townsville, Qld:

Why does the magazine called Macworld keep publishing stuff about the iPod? Some of us don't have one, and don't intend getting one. We do, however, buy the magazine for it purports so cover Macs. Surely there are enough magazines to cover iPods?

A fair point, and one that Mr Feltham is not alone in making. The iPod is not a Mac, but because it's an Apple product and Macworld is the magazine people turn to for info about Apple, we've had to cover it pretty heavily.

It's a large part of why we started *Player* magazine last year — so that it can take on the iPod and free up *AMW* to cover Macs. There will always be some iPod coverage in *Macworld*, but as *Player* grows you'll see less of it in these pages, and what we do cover will be more directly relevant to using the iPod with a Mac. This is especially important now that Apple has stretched Mac OS beyond general-purpose computers and into specialised devices like AppleTV and iPhone (a fact which, to me, was far more interesting than the actual hardware of either device).

If Steve Jobs really doesn't think he was talking about Macs in San Francisco, then he's underestimating the importance of his announcement. That would be unusual. ☹

Matthew J.C. Powell

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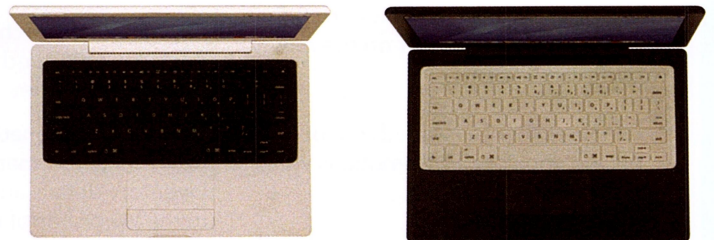
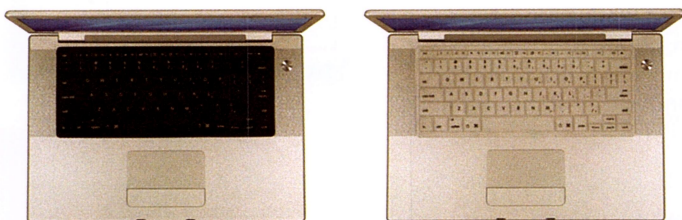
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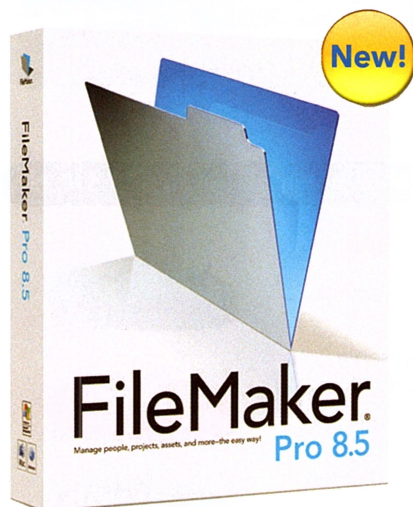
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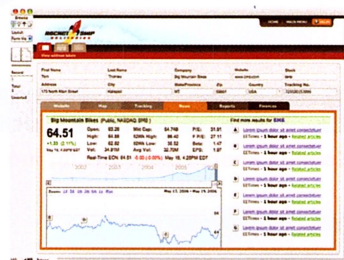
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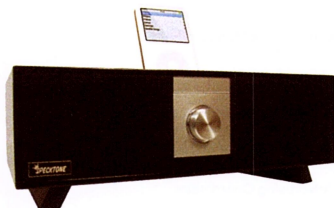


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Creating a Windows install CD



This issue Conexus (02 9975 2799) is giving a SpeckTone Retro speaker system valued at \$250 to the *Australian Macworld* reader who sends in what we deem to be the most interesting letter. Listen to your iPod at home with this exceptional speaker system that accepts virtually all dockable iPods. All 4G, 5G, mini, and nano iPods can be placed in and played through the SpeckTone Retro dock connector. Even an iPod shuffle can be plugged in via the AUX input jack on the back of the SpeckTone Retro. The SpeckTone Retro delivers dynamic, rich sound with uncompromising quality thanks to its analogue circuitry, 4-inch subwoofer and 28 watt output. Its sleek retro design is complemented by a high-gloss lacquered wood finish. The iPod even charges when the Retro is turned on. Speck's Skintight cases (included for nano and 5G iPods) allow you to use the SpeckTone Retro without removing the case.

Basic problem

Apparently the word is out that Microsoft is dropping Visual Basic from its next version of Office for Mac and that means (for me) hours of worthwhile macros will go out the door if I upgrade. I'm aware that alternatives are in the wind, but is it true that those alternatives will not allow cross-platform capability (as far as macros are concerned)? If so, that is definitely a deal breaker for me.

Apparently, also, objections were at first vocal but are now waning. Could it be that others like myself have not voiced their concern and should continue to do so? Do you have any suggestions on the matter?

Phil Maas
via internet

You're right, Phil, that the initial flurry of complaint about this issue has begun to wane. The thing is, it's not just a deal-breaker as far as purchasing Office for Mac is concerned — in many companies, the lack of cross-platform support for macros will be a deal-breaker as far as purchasing Macs. Microsoft has been strangely silent on the subject since its initial announcement, but we Mac users mustn't be. Call Microsoft, hop onto Microsoft discussion boards and forums, and tell everyone who'll listen (willingly or not) that Visual Basic in Office 2007 for Mac is essential, no matter how technically difficult it may be. — M.JC.P.

Letters should be e-mailed to matthew.powell@niche.com.au with a subject header of "Mailbox" or by post to *Australian Macworld* Mailbox, 3/165 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda, Victoria 3182. Letters of fewer than 200 words are given preference. We reserve the right to edit letters and probably will. To be eligible for the SpeckTone Retro prize, you must include your full name and address, including state or territory.

iPods and others

I just finished reading the editorial in your January 2007 issue, and I have to say it hit a slightly raw nerve.

I am one of the people who returned a "dead" iPod mini to a dealer — just a couple of days inside warranty. After a few days examining it, they rang me to come and pick up a brand-new replacement. Presumably the old one had needed more than just resetting. I shudder to think of my disappointment had the problem arisen a few days later, when the warranty had expired.

This reminds me of my experience with my 20-inch iMac G5. It turned out to need a new motherboard, a problem which was only finally identified just a couple of days before its warranty expired. The dealer told me that if the problem had been identified a few days later, it would have cost me over \$1500 — practically the cost of a new iMac.

My Mighty Mouse also died — although this time well within warranty.

In short, each of my last three Apple-branded hardware purchases has been defective. Thanks to MacMedia (AppleCentre Adelaide) and Next Byte, I am not out of pocket, except in the sense that my faith was sufficiently shaken that I took the opportunity to shell out substantial amounts on extended AppleCare warranties on the iPod and the iMac.

Do you think that Apple's manufacturing production standards have slipped?

Gary Mason
Unley SA

It's very hard to say, Gary. For one thing, Apple's selling more product now than it ever has before, so even if the percentage of duds is lower the raw numbers may be bigger. And the weight of anecdotal evidence is that the percentage of duds is not lower, but that evidence is clouded. There is a din of trivial complaints that can crowd out legitimate concerns like yours — which was the point of last month's editorial. I'd like to believe that Apple's quality control is as good as it's ever been, but it's just hard to know. — M.JC.P.

Rings a bell

Steve Cooper ("Myth takes", Mailbox 01.2007) wondered where he had last read that since version 10.4.3 the Mac automatically runs any missing Unix maintenance routines when it is powered up. The answer is probably *Australian MacWorld*! Help folder (01.2006) states "Apple has changed the way these scripts are run in the OS X v10.4.2 update — now if the machine is turned off when the scripts are scheduled to run, they'll be run when the machine is next turned on."

Michael Calver
Murdoch, WA

Ah, yes, well, that would be it then. — M.JC.P.

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Good news

After reading countless articles and letters in regard to Apple's poor customer service, I feel I need to express my recent experience. My MacBook Core Duo became faulty with a dodgy SuperDrive, screen anomalies and a poor fitting top-case, I phoned Apple customer service. I was greeted by a pleasant young woman who took down my details and problems, entered the information and gave me a service number to pass onto the service centre. I shipped the MacBook Pro off to DesignWyse in Dandenong, which ordered the parts required, and shipped it back to me in less than two weeks. Both Apple and DesignWyse need a pat on the back for such wonderful customer service. The quality of service really has enhanced my experience with Apple.

Nic Wilke
Albury, NSW.

Someone likes Alex

Alex Rieneck's Soapbox in the 12.2006 issue deserves front page recognition.

I have bought three MacBooks in the last month for myself and my family and have been busily making things simple for my retired parents to operate in the Mac environment, which is new for all of us Windows converts.

Alex pointed readers to a piece of software that has removed 2.5GB of space on our little 60GB HDDs. Why Mac OS X ships with 2.5 GB of foreign languages installed is a inexplicable. I have now assisted our whole IT department — all Intel MacBook converts — to free up their disk space too with Monolingual.

Alex and *Macworld* — keep it coming!

Dan Sawyer
Docklands, Vic.

I hope you've also read the documentation accompanying Monolingual and the Mailbox section of the 01.2007 issue of AMW to alert you to some problems that you might have with the program, Dan. But thanks for the pat on the back.

— M.J.C.P.

PlayStation PDA

I'd been holding off getting a PDA, waiting for just the right smartphone to come out. I just couldn't find one that I could get excited about (or that I knew would work intuitively on a Mac). Then I began to get worried about "the more things it does, the more can go wrong" and started to change my mind about getting a smartphone. I already have wireless access with my MacBook Pro, and quite frankly I don't want to be answering e-mails when I'm having a meeting or just out of the office. However, I did still want something that I could sync to my contacts, notes and calendar rather than carrying around a paper diary.

Here is where the Sony PlayStation Portable (PSP) comes in. As a gamer I'd thought this was a great little gadget but didn't see how I could justify spending \$400 on another console — until I discovered that with the help of MissingSync you can have Entourage synced beautifully to it!

For those of us that think that clients and colleagues can just wait for a reply to an e-mail until we get back to the office, but still want to have access to their Entourage information (and who want to be able to play games while commuting between jobs), MissingSync lets you do all of this on a PSP.

Natalie Burgess
Ethelton, SA

Macworld

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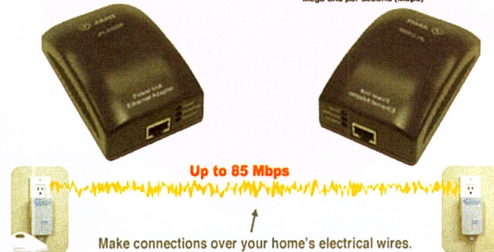
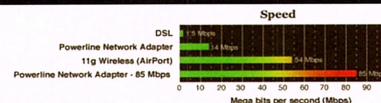
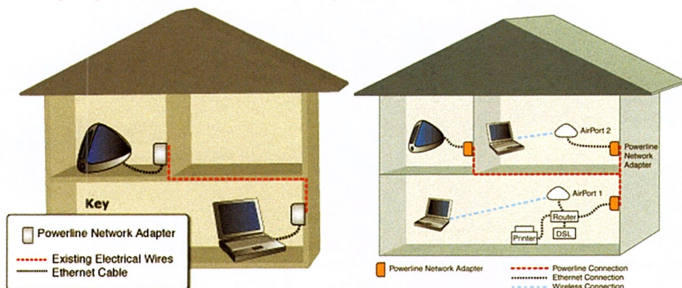
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Apple unveils iPhone

AFTER more than two years in the making, Steve Jobs finally announced Apple's intention to enter the mobile handset market, unveiling the new Apple iPhone during his keynote address at the Macworld Expo in San Francisco. The iPhone brings together several features of the iPod, digital camera, smart phones and even portable computing to one device, with a widescreen display and an innovative input method.

"Every once in a while a revolutionary product comes along that changes everything," Jobs said.

Featuring a new input technology called "Multi-Touch" the iPhone features only a single physical button, called "home." You control the phone by sliding a finger across its touch-sensitive 3.5-inch display, which has a resolution of 320x480 pixels at 160 pixels-per-inch.

The iPhone, which runs Mac OS X, has full iTunes integration and can seamlessly sync data with a Mac, PC, or internet service, including music and videos from iTunes, contacts, calendars, photos, notes, bookmarks and e-mail accounts.

The 11.6mm-millimeter thick device weighs 135 grams and sports a 2-megapixel camera, volume control, ring-silent switch, 3.5mm headset/audio jack, SIM tray, "sleep-wake" switch, speaker, microphone, and a 30-pin iPod dock connector. The quad-band GSM (850MHz, 900MHz, 1800MHz, and 1900MHz) + EDGE phone also has 802.11b/g Wi-Fi and Bluetooth 2.0 capabilities. Jobs noted 3G capabilities will come in the future.

Three smart sensors also help control the iPhone's behaviour. A proximity sensor shuts down the display and touchscreen when the phone is held to the ear. An ambient light sensor automatically adjusts screen brightness to save power. Meanwhile, an accelerometer lets the phone know whether to display in portrait or landscape mode.

Despite the phone's revolutionary features, Jobs claimed that the phone's strongest feature was its redefinition of how calls are made. "We want to reinvent the phone," Jobs said. "What's the killer app? The killer app is making calls. It's amazing how hard it is to make calls on phones. We want you to use contacts like never before."

A Visual Voice-mail feature (network-specific to the US Cingular network at this stage) allows users to skip directly to voice mails they want to hear. An easy-to-use conference call feature lets users connect two calls with one touch of the screen. Text messaging on the iPhone is similar to iChat, with user dialogue encased in bubbles and with familiar iChat sounds, and a touch keyboard appears below for entering text. It's unclear whether the iPhone will allow users to connect directly to the AIM network for real iChats.

The iPhone uses its Wi-Fi and EDGE capabilities to connect to the internet automatically (and it intelligently selects the fastest network in range). Internet connectivity includes HTML-capable e-mail that works with any IMAP or POP3 e-mail service. Jobs also announced that Yahoo will offer free push e-mail – sort of similar to the e-mail system on a Blackberry – to all iPhone customers.



A wake-up call for the industry

With the announcement of the iPhone, Apple has put a tremendous amount of pressure on handset makers like Motorola and Nokia, according to industry analysts. Capitalising on its legendary ease-of-use, Apple will be a competitor out of the gate.

"There was so much demand for the iPhone, it should serve as a wake-up call to the rest of the industry," said Michael Gartenberg, vice president and research director of JupiterResearch. "It's going to put a lot of pressure on the other handset makers in the high-end market, and that's where the money is."

According to figures quoted by Steve Jobs during his keynote, 957 million mobile phones were sold in the US last year. (That compares to 209 million PCs.) Just a one percent market share would mean selling around 10 million units — and that happens to be Apple's goal for 2008.

Using a new touch screen and Mac OS X for its navigation, the iPhone will seem very familiar to Mac users and should be a refreshing change for users of other smartphones once the Apple device ships. Like it did with the original iPod, Apple took a different approach to solving the problems associated with the cell phone.

"We knew we had an opportunity to reinvent the phone," said Greg Joswiak, Apple's vice president of Worldwide iPod Product Marketing, after the Jobs keynote. "Apple has never

been about doing a 'me too' product — we take a complicated task and make it simple."

While it will be some time before the full effects of the iPhone will be felt, Apple has strong feelings on what its impact will be. "It will do for the phone market what the Mac did for personal computers," Joswiak said.

Apple has long been considered a niche company working with a small market share, but the iPod has propelled it into a mass-market success. The iPod's success has helped drive up market share for the Macintosh, as well. The iPhone puts Apple front and centre in another mass market that it hopes to one day own a significant piece of — it's clear Apple hopes to duplicate the iPod's success both to its bottom line as well as its core business.

Jobs called Tuesday's unveiling "a day I've been looking forward to for 'two-and-a-half years.'" Apple executives say the iPhone, while a new venture for Apple, stems from the company's corporate culture. "A lot of the decisions we made during the hard times have led to where we are today," Joswiak said. "While other companies were cutting back, we continued to invest in products and technologies that we believed in."

While Jobs announced more than the iPhone during his keynote, it is this product that analysts are looking to set the mark for the company in 2007.

"The iPhone will send a shock wave that will be felt well beyond San Francisco," JupiterResearch's Gartenberg said. "This is a defining moment for Apple." — Jim Dalrymple

Apple will also include a version of its Safari web browser, and the phone can use its internet capabilities to view standard web pages, rather than WAP versions of pages. Integrated Google Maps functionality lets users look up locations, search for local businesses, and view satellite imagery. The iPhone also supports Dashboard widgets, and Apple announced it will include weather and stock widgets.

The iPhone's photo management features are equally interesting. Its software enables users to use a "pinching" motion to zoom in and out of pictures, and an inbuilt accelerometer automatically orients pictures in standard or landscape mode depending on how

the device is held. When playing music, the iPhone can automatically adjust levels up or down as calls come in.

The iPhone will be released in June in the US in two versions: a 4GB model and an 8GB one. Jobs said Apple plans to bring the iPhone to Europe in the fourth calendar quarter of 2007, and to Asia (including Australia) in 2008 (by which time specifics of the product are almost certain to have changed). Jobs also announced two accessories for the iPhone: stereo headphones with integrated microphone, and a Bluetooth headset that pairs automatically with the iPhone and goes to sleep to preserve battery life. Obviously no local pricing was available for these products. — *Mathew Honan*

■ NOMENCLATURE

Apple drops "Computer"

SO Steve Jobs reckons Apple is moving so heavily into consumer electronics — with products like the iPod, AppleTV and iPhone — that it shouldn't be "Apple Computer Inc" anymore. From now on it's to be known as plain old "Apple Inc". Even though its core business (excuse the pun) is still computers, Steve doesn't want to be limited.

Fair enough. In truth, a reasonable majority of people have always insisted upon calling the company "Apple Computers,"

which was never its name, or even "Mac," as if the product and the company were one (as in "I called up Mac to see if I could get a warranty repair done"). For a company that prides itself on having one of the most recognised brands on the planet, it has sure had trouble getting people to remember its name. Apple Inc. Should remove the confusion.

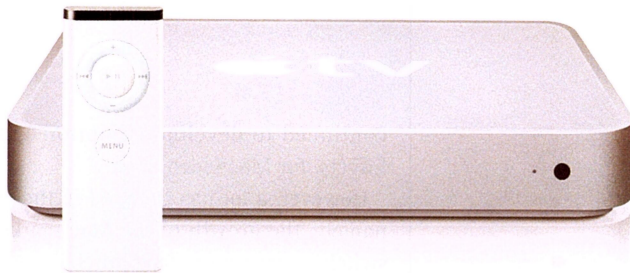
Speaking of confusion, though, I can't help wondering how the lawyers for the Beatles' Apple Corps (not "Corp" as many insist) are going to feel about it though. If anything, the two companies' names are closer than ever once the word "Computer" is removed. — *Matthew JC. Powell*

MULTIMEDIA



Hot Links

www.apple.com/au/appletv
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AppleTV to debut soon

DURING the keynote, Steve Jobs gave the set-top box that streams multimedia content from your computer to your television a new name. Introduced last September under the iTV code name, the new AppleTV allows consumers to watch content from the iTunes on a television, bridging the gap between the computer and home entertainment system.

Jobs also announced the \$449 device would be available in February, and the company has begun taking orders.

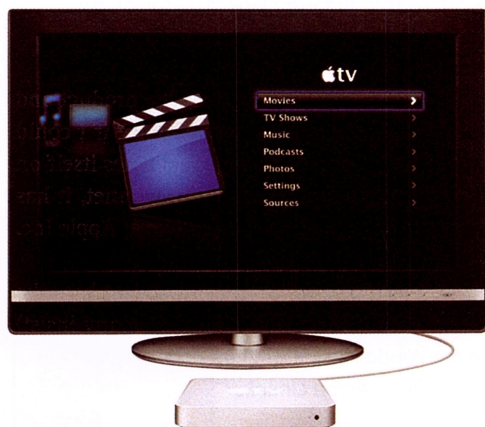
AppleTV sports connections for USB 2, Ethernet, HDMI, component video, and optical audio connections. The device also supports three popular 802.11 wireless standards — 802.11b, 802.11g, and the draft specification of 802.11n — allowing users to stream content wirelessly from Macs or PCs running iTunes 7 to a TV. An IR remote control is included

AppleTV connects to your TV via an HDMI port or component video and audio ports. Its wireless capability automatically syncs your iTunes library to any Mac or PC in the house. Any changes made to the iTunes library are automatically reflected on AppleTV. It also can access and control music and photo libraries from up to five computers.

AppleTV stores recordings on a 40GB hard drive, capable of storing up to 50 hours of movies and TV shows, 9000 songs, or 25,000 pictures according to specs provided by Apple. The AppleTV also features an Intel processor “so it has the kind of user interface we like to do,” Jobs said. In addition, Apple TV delivers up to 720p high-definition resolution. That may disappoint high-definition purists who were hoping it would support the full 1080p resolution, but remember that this device is meant to stream video from iTunes, not a high-definition disc player.

Supported video formats include: H.264 and protected H.264 (iTunes Store video) and MPEG-4: 640x480, 30 fps, Simple Profile. As to audio formats, the AppleTV supports AAC, protected AAC (iTunes Store music), MP3, WAV, AIFF, and Apple Lossless. The AppleTV will display JPEG, BMP, GIF, TIFF, and PNG photos.

While the Australian iTunes Store still does not sell video content other than music videos and Pixar shorts, it should be possible to encode your own video (from whatever source) to work on the device.



The device's depth and width is 19.5cm square, making it slightly larger than the Mac mini it resembles. AppleTV is 2.8cm tall and weighs a tiny bit over 1kg. System requirements include iTunes 7.1, Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later or Windows XP Home or Professional (SP2), and a WiFi 802.11b, 802.11g, or 802.11n wireless network. The device requires an 802.11g or n network for wireless streaming. — *Mathew Honan*

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■ VIDEO



Hot Links

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Home of the Prodigal Premiere

Premiere returns to the Mac

ADobe has announced that it will revive a Mac version of Premiere, the software maker's video program aimed at professional editors. The new Mac version will only run on Intel-based Macs and will be part of a larger Adobe Production Studio suite that will include Adobe Encore DVD and Adobe Soundbooth.

Adobe dropped Mac support for Premiere in July 2003. At the time, the company cited Apple's increased efforts in the digital-video market, particularly with its Final Cut editing application. While Premiere disappeared from the Mac platform, Adobe

continued to develop its motion-graphics application, After Effects, for Mac video pros.

However, a lot has changed in the ensuing three-plus years — namely, the growth of the Mac market and Apple's decision to switch to processors from Intel.

"If you look at the industry as a whole, Mac customers are very important to us," said Simon Hayhurst, director of product management for dynamic media at Adobe. "Pulling Premiere from the Mac was probably the hardest decision we ever made. It was always our intention to bring that back, and Apple's move to Intel made it easier."

Specifically, Apple's decision to use Intel-built chips in its hardware gave Adobe the opportunity to start from scratch, Hayhurst said. The company was able to build the type of application it wanted to, instead of porting old code over to the Mac platform. The end result, Hayhurst added, is a fast performer.

Analysis: The Return of Premiere

The oddsmakers in Vegas wouldn't have even thought it possible, but Adobe shocked the Mac video editing community with its announcement of the return of Premiere for Mac. Few would have guessed after Adobe dropped Mac support for its video-editing program three and a half years ago that the company would aggressively relaunch Premiere Pro.

After all, the picture painted by Adobe when it came out with the first Windows-only version of Premiere in 2003 was one where the company felt it could no longer compete with Apple's digital-video editing offerings (namely Final Cut Pro). Back then, David Trescot, senior director of Adobe's digital video products group, told *Macworld*, "If Apple's already doing an application, it makes the market for a third-party developer that much smaller."

That stiff competition from Apple may have been only part of the picture. According to Simon Hayhurst, Adobe's director of product management for dynamic media, at that point in Premiere's development, Adobe was at a crossroads. "We weren't happy with [Premiere 6.5]. We knew that if we wanted it as a truly professional application, we needed to rewrite it from the ground up."

Splitting its efforts between a PC and Mac rewrite would have pushed the next version of Premiere too far back. Instead, Adobe opted to concentrate on the PC version. And with Premiere Pro, Adobe has found success on the PC side, even among high-end users. The application let video pros edit ultra high quality 4:4:4 colour space HD (with a third-party Bluefish video card) before rival apps Final Cut Pro or Avid could.

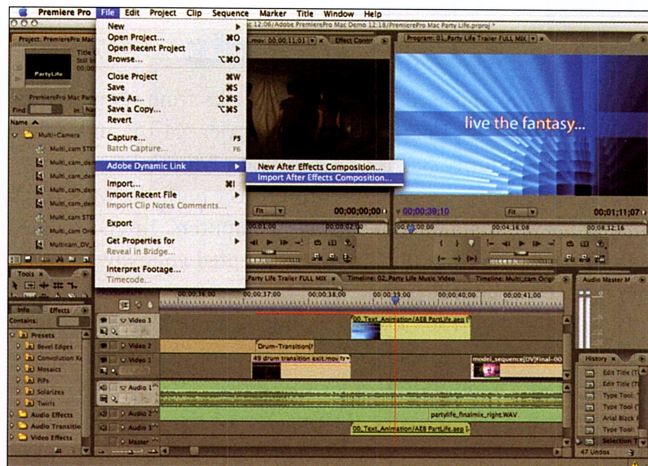
The popularity of Premiere Pro on the PC platform seems to stem from two strengths. Adobe created Premiere Pro with an

open architecture. Third-party hardware and software developers can get SDKs for Premiere Pro and build their products around the program, adding features to the Premiere Pro in the process. So Matrox can sell its Axio HD and SD platforms, which are built around Premiere Pro. And Cineform can offer its Prospect HD product.

Premiere's other strength comes from how Adobe bundles its software offerings, building on heavyweight products like Photoshop and After Effects.

Interoperability is key to Adobe's Production Suite bundle. Dynamic Linking is a prime example. With Dynamic Linking, you can work on a composition in After Effects, Adobe's motion-graphics application, and then drag that composition into Premiere Pro or Encore DVD without rendering it out first. In this case, Premiere Pro would simply treat the After Effects composition as a clip. However, if you subsequently make changes to the composition in After Effects, those changes automatically translate over to the Premiere Pro project. By contrast, current Mac users need to render their After Effects sequences and export to QuickTime before they can start using them in Final Cut Pro or Avid.

By returning to the Mac platform, Adobe still does face a wicked one-two punch on the non-linear editor front from Apple's Final Cut Pro and Avid's offerings — programs that have been anything but idle in the three years Premiere has been away. However, as part of the Production Suite bundle, Premiere Pro may indeed find some traction, especially if Adobe prices it aggressively. And don't be surprised if the same advantages that helped Premiere on the Windows side wind up appealing to Mac-based editors as well. — *Anton Linecker*



"I believe we can help Apple sell a lot of Intel Macs," said Hayhurst. While Adobe executives kept mum on the specific features that Premiere would have in the new version, they did say that the Mac version would have everything that the Windows version has, including tight integration within the suite.

Don't expect to find many similarities with the old Mac version of Premiere. "They both have wheels and body frame, but that as far as the similarities go. This is a completely different animal, except for the name," Hayhurst said. "The team has done an outstanding job."

Part of the reason that Adobe decided to bring Premiere back was the interest and feedback the company received from Final Cut Pro users, according to Hayhurst. The company feels that the level of integration it brings to the market cannot be challenged.

"What makes the difference is who has the best integration – that's what we're seeing time and again," Hayhurst said. "Fifty percent of the features in the update cycle focus on integration."

Premiere and the Adobe Production Studio will be released in mid-2007. There was no word on whether a public beta would be released, as Adobe has done for its audio-production application Soundbooth, its image-management app Photoshop Lightroom and the Intel-native CS3 version of Photoshop.

Pricing for the Adobe Production Studio suite has not been set. In addition to Premiere and the DVD-authoring app Encore DVD, the suite also includes Soundbooth, Photoshop and After Effects. Photoshop, After Effects and Illustrator will also be available separately as Universal binaries for PowerPC owners.

— Jim Dalrymple



External Drives



Flash/Promotional Drives

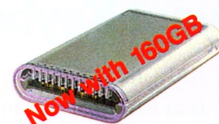


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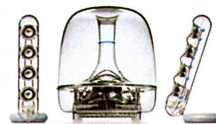
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Dvorak keyboard skin

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The Movies demo

zCover offers Dvorak Layout Keyboard Skin

CHANGING your Mac to support the Dvorak keyboard layout is as easy as switching a system preference, but that doesn't change the letters printed on the keys themselves. That's where zCover's Dvorak Layout Keyboard Skin comes into play.

Dr. August Dvorak developed his key layout back in the 1930s as an alternative to the QWERTY layout – the standard we still use today. More commonly used letters are situated on the “home row” of the keyboard and fewer words are typed using a single hand. Ergonomic experts and practitioners believe Dvorak's layout is more comfortable to use and more efficient, although QWERTY remains the dominant layout in use today.

To switch your Macintosh to Dvorak input, all you need to do is select the International system preference and check Dvorak in the Input menu – the Mac will reconfigure your standard QWERTY keyboard to accept input in the Dvorak layout instead. If you're not a touch typist, or if you momentarily forget where a letter is, you might have to go searching.

zCover's Dvorak Layout Keyboard Skin fixes that problem. It's made of silicone rubber and designed to fit over Apple Keyboards and Apple Wireless Keyboards. It's printed in white with black letters, to match the keyboard, and measures only 0.6mm thick. It stays in place and is tear-resistant, but can also be removed (and washed) for easy cleaning. — Peter Cohen

FileMaker plug-in compares layout differences

FmPro Layout Diff 1.0, a utility from .com Solutions that extracts and compares field information from FileMaker layouts was just prior to Macworld Expo in San Francisco.

FmPro Layout Diff presents information in a columnar format for viewing, exporting, and comparison. Fields can be compared by either Field ID or Field Name, with the resulting differences displayed in a re-sizable, sortable list. FmPro Layout Diff shows FileMaker 8.5 layout object names for an entire layout, without requiring objects to be individually clicked in layout mode within FileMaker. Large layouts are instantly resized and printed on a single printed page for documentation and development purposes.

FmPro Layout Diff is a Universal Binary available for Mac OS X for \$US50 for a single user license. — Mathew Honan

Intego releases two security products

INTEGO has released two security packs from its new Dual Protection (DP) line: Intego VirusBarrier X4 DP and Intego Internet Security Barrier X4 Antispam Edition DP.

The applications are designed to protect both the Mac OS X and Windows installations on Mac computers. Intego teamed with BitDefender, traditionally a PC-oriented company, to offer the two new products.

Intego VirusBarrier X4 DP protects both Mac OS X and Windows from all known viruses, and contains Intego VirusBarrier X4 and BitDefender Antivirus.

Intego Internet Security Barrier X4 Antispam Edition DP protects Mac OS X and Windows from hackers, vandals, spyware, spam and phishing. That package contains Intego NetBarrier X4, Intego VirusBarrier X4, Intego Personal Antispam X4, BitDefender Internet Security v10, BitDefender Antivirus, BitDefender Firewall and BitDefender Antispam.

Both packages are available now from Intego's web site, and are distributed in Australia by Pica Australia (03 9788 9588).

— Mathew Honan

Nisus Writer Pro coming this spring

NISUS Software has announced Nisus Writer Pro, a word-processor application based on Nisus Writer Express. New features in the Pro version include a table of contents, cross references, bookmarks, text wrap around images, widow and orphan control, and line numbering.

Nisus Writer Pro will be available in a few months and pricing will be announced at that time. Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later is required. — Mathew Honan

The Movies demo out now

FERAL Interactive released a demo version of its Macintosh game The Movies, a conversion of a title originally developed by Lionhead Studios, just before the Expo. The 800MB (no, that's not a typo) demo is now available for download.

The Movies is a strategy game with some elements of The Sims thrown in for good measure: In it, you run a Hollywood movie studio, from the golden age of film straight through to the modern day. You can take the executive approach, if you prefer to find the talent and wheel and deal as necessary to make sure you're a force in the industry. If you prefer, you can get behind the camera, directing stars, staging scenes and producing your own movies, which you can then share with others over the internet.

This is the second game published by Feral recently after a lengthy hiatus; the company also began shipping Imperial Glory, a massive strategy game set during the Napoleonic Era.

System requirements call for Mac OS X v10.4 or later, G4 1.67 or faster (including Intel; it's a Universal binary), 512MB RAM and a 3D graphics card with at least 64MB VRAM. We'd also recommend a broadband connection for the download. — Peter Cohen

■ USERS AND GROUPS



Hot Links

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If your MUG isn't listed here, drop us a line

MUG meeting list

February 2007

Fri 2

SAAUC [SA]

www.saauc.org.au/nextmeet.html

Sat 3

AUSOM Incorporated [VIC]

www.ausom.net.au/nextmeeting.html

Mon 5

Gold Coast Mac Users Group

[QLD]

www.goldcoastmacusers.org.au

SHCUG [NSW]

www.shcug.org.au

AMUG [NSW]

homepage.mac.com/sydamug

WAMUG [WA]

www.wamug.org.au/meetings

Tue 6

MacTalk [NSW]

[tech.groups.yahoo.com](http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/MacTalk)

/group/MacTalk

NQMUG [QLD]

www.nqmug.org

Wed 7

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User Group [QLD]

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Coffs Harbour Mac User Group

[NSW]

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ClubMac [NSW]

www.clubmac.org.au

SAAUC [SA]

www.saauc.org.au/nextmeet.html

Thu 8

TasMac [TAS]

[tech.groups.yahoo.com/](http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/tasmug)

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Geraldton Mac User Group

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Sun 11

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[home.worldlink.com.au/](http://home.worldlink.com.au/appleserv/GCUsers.html)

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Macintosh Multimedia

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www.imug.com.au

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ClubMac [NSW]

www.clubmac.org.au

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meetings.html

Retirees & Others [VIC]

www.ausom.net.au/retirees.html

Sun 18

Apple-Q [QLD]

[www.actapple.org.au/Pages/](http://www.actapple.org.au/Pages/Meetings/Meetings.html)

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Mon 19

BeSMUG [NSW]

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Tue 20

Sydney Mac Users Group

www.sydney.macusersgroup.org

BEAUT [VIC]

www.beaut.org.au/events.html

Thu 22

CVMU [VIC]

www.cvmu.net

Tue 27

ACTApple [ACT]

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■ PRODUCTIVITY



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Office 2008 for Mac details revealed

INTEL-BASED Mac owners will have a Universal version of Microsoft's Office to call their own later this year. Microsoft's Macintosh Business Unit revealed some details about Office 2008 for Mac in San Francisco — namely that the suite of office productivity tools would ship in the second half of 2007.

"I'm really impressed with the speed [of the Intel version], especially with graphics intensive tasks," said Sheridan Jones, group marketing manager for the Microsoft Macintosh Business Unit.

Office 2008 for Mac will share some technologies with its Windows counterpart, Office 2007, making for seamless compatibility between the different versions, according to Microsoft. Both Office releases will use the Office Open XML Formats, which will enable users to save files and open files easily in either platform.

Office 2004 users are not being left out of the new file formats, either — in February, Microsoft will release a free beta of the file format converters for the current version, so users can read and write the new Office Open XML Formats.

The company has apparently not relented, unfortunately, in its decision to drop support for Visual Basic scripting in Office 2008. While increasing support for Automator and AppleScript will be a boon for Mac users who only want to learn one scripting tool, the lack of Visual Basic means that scripts will not be compatible between Windows and Mac versions. This could be a major problem for Mac users in mixed environments.

■ SHENANIGANS



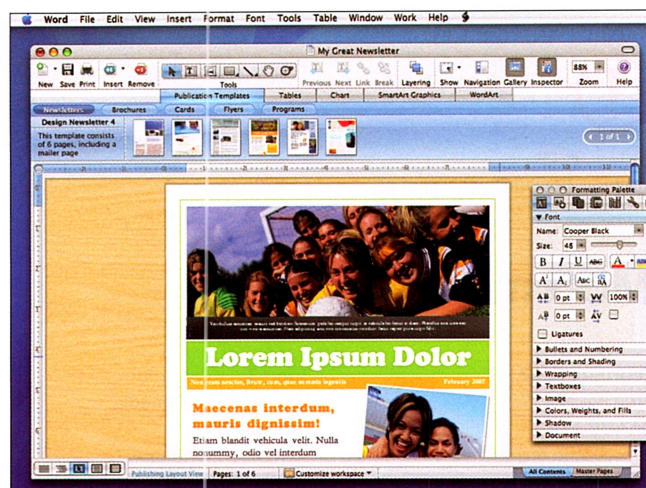
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Washington Post's analysis (they broke the Watergate story, you know)

Apple clears executives in probe

AN investigation into stock option irregularities by Apple has cleared its current executive team of any misconduct, although CEO Steve Jobs was found to be aware or recommended favourable grant dates, the company said in its regulatory filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

While Jobs was aware of the grants, the probe concluded that he did not financially benefit from any of the grants. The special



A new face. Office 2007 for Windows includes a new user interface feature called the Ribbon that gives users quick access to specific tools. The Mac version will include a similar feature dubbed the Elements Gallery and Document Parts that can automate some of the most common document tasks, such as adding a table of contents or headers and footers to documents.

"We want things to be more discoverable," Jones said. "We really worked hard on the user interface of Office 2008 for Mac, but we worked just as hard on enhancing the usability."

Other new features of Office 2008 for Mac include a Publishing Layout View that lets users create layout-rich documents in Word and Ledger Sheets that enables Excel to handle common financial management tasks such as budgets, invoices, and registers, without requiring users to whip up complex formulas on their own.

Another smaller application that will be included with Office 2008 is My Day. The stand-alone application allows users to track priorities and stay on top of daily tasks no matter what application they're currently working in and without launching Office's Entourage personal information manager. — *Jim Dalrymple*

committee set up to investigate the irregularities raised concerns regarding the actions of two former officers in connection with the accounting, recording and reporting of stock option grants.

While the probe did not name the officers, Fred Anderson, former chief financial officer, resigned from the board in October as the company announced the internal investigation's end. Nancy Heinen, former senior vice president and general counsel, left the company — quietly and without comment — in May. At the time, a company spokesman confirmed she had left, but couldn't say why.

"The board of directors is confident that the company has corrected the problems that led to the restatement, and it has complete confidence in Steve Jobs and the senior management team," said Al Gore, chair of the special committee, and Jerome York, chair of Apple's Audit and Finance Committee, in a joint statement. — *Jim Dalrymple*

■ NETWORKING



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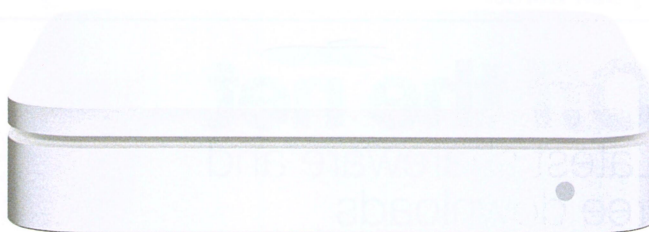
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www.apple.com/au/wireless/80211/
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AirPort goes fast and square

OUTSIDE of the Expo keynote, Apple quietly introduced a new AirPort Extreme Base Station that supports 802.11n, a faster networking standard that works up to five times faster and up to twice the range as its predecessor. The new base station is expected to ship in February for \$259.

The new AirPort Extreme Base Station makes a radical design departure from its predecessors. While the older base stations had a squat, teardrop-shaped design, the new model features a beveled, square shape similar to the Mac mini or AppleTV. It measures 16.5cm square and 3.3cm tall.

Based on a draft specification of the IEEE 802.11n standard, the new AirPort Extreme Base Station is backward-compatible with the earlier 802.11g standard, and also works with 802.11b and 802.11a-based devices. 802.11n utilises a technique known as



Multiple-Input Multiple-Output (MIMO) to achieve the faster performance and longer range, and while it offers seamless connectivity with older products, the performance of an 802.11n network will slow down if slower devices are connected.

The new base station also enables you to share USB-based printers and hard disk drives with the network, and can support a hub, so you can attach multiple devices. Software included with the device enables you to create password-protected accounts, or limit access to certain files and folders. The device itself can support up to 50 users at once.

Certain Macs which are shipping now are capable of supporting the 802.11n draft standard, using enabling software included with the new AirPort Extreme Base Station.

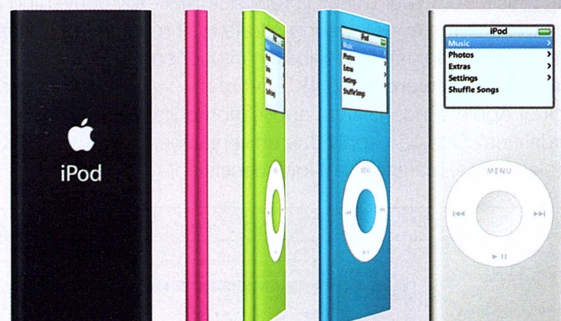
Those systems include:

- iMac with Intel Core 2 Duo processors (excluding the 17-inch, 1.83GHz iMac)
- MacBook with Intel Core 2 Duo
- MacBook Pro with Intel Core 2 Duo
- Mac Pro with AirPort Extreme card option — *Peter Cohen*

Canon PowerShot A640, 10 megapixels, \$599



iPod nano, 2GB–8GB, \$219+



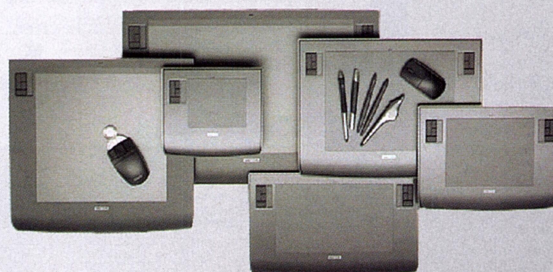
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Tutorial on the use of Project365

Dreamsicle 1.0.2 \$US11.95 Shareware X (10.3.9) Universal

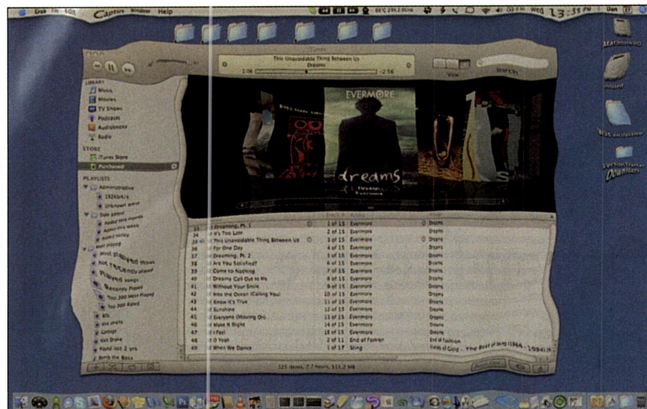
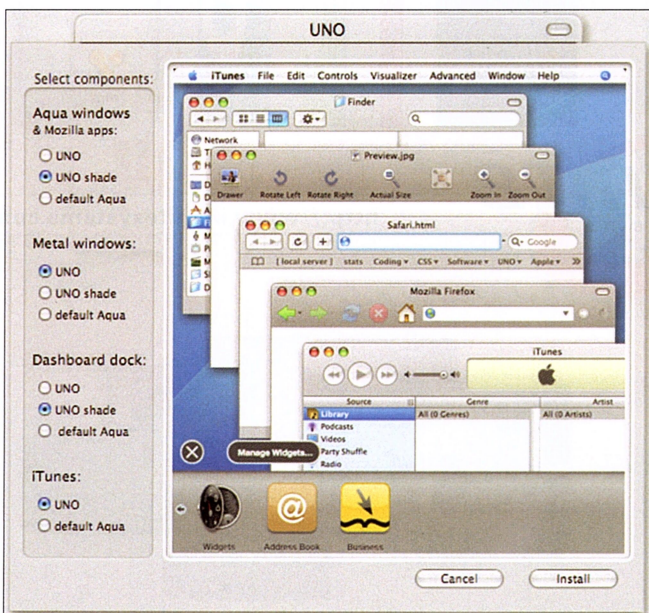
If you have a Sony-Ericsson Walkman phone, you can now sync your music to it with this slick little app. It grabs music from iTunes, does video conversion to the appropriate format and bitrate for phone playback and iPhoto image conversion for wallpapers.

Thrupp 2.01 \$US14.95 Shareware X (10.3.9) Universal

Got a phone that takes a memory card or internal memory that can mount as USB mass storage in the Finder? Thrupp can load it up with music from your iTunes library, automatically converting AAC files to MP3 and even lowering bitrate to fit more in the phone. Leaves your original iTunes library untouched.

Uno 1.3.2 Freeware X (10.4) Universal

Sick of Apple's inconsistent application of its own interface guidelines? Uno can apply one universal theme across OS X and Apple's apps, making them look consistent.



LotsaWater 1.4 Freeware X (10.4) Universal

One of the most amazing screensavers, and only available for OS X. Droplets of water plop down on your desktop and create smooth ripple effects. Also check out LotsaEscher (a constantly twisting and twirling Escher pic) and LotsaGlass, a smooth liquid metal blob morphing in front of your eyes.

Hills 1.2 Freeware X (10.4) Universal

A calming screensaver that provides a birds-eye view of flying over perfectly-manicured grass fields on undulating hills.

VLC Media Player 0.8.6 Freeware X (10.3.9) Universal

For a 0.0.1 point release of this powerful multi-format video player, this packs a lot of extra features. It can now play back Windows Media 9 and Flash Video, is a Universal Binary for faster performance on Intel Macs and supports the Apple IR remote control.

VisualHub 1.19 \$US23.32 Shareware X (10.3.9) Universal

The big-brother to the freeware iSquint video converter, promising conversion of any video file in three steps (click, drag, click). Uses the spare processing power of other Macs on your network to convert video files faster and can make full use of multi-core machines.

LastFM 1.1.0 Freeware X (10.4) Universal

Automatically submits the names of the tracks you listen to in iTunes to the Last.FM web site. You can then use the Last.FM client on your PC (looks and feels a bit like iTunes) to listen to automatically compiled "radio stations" based on what other people with similar musical tastes have been listening to. Neat!

PicLens Beta 1 Freeware X (10.4) Universal

A plugin for Safari that allows you to browse online photo web sites like Flickr, Photobucket, Facebook, Google Images and Yahoo images as full-screen slideshows.

Martian Lifeboat 1.0.1 \$US13.99 Shareware X (10.4) Universal


There's a fundamental problem with backing up laptops: often a scheduled backup triggers when an external drive isn't connected. Martian Lifeboat senses when you connect your external disk and does a backup then, neatly solving the problem.

Project365 1 Freeware X (10.4) Universal

Intrigued by the idea of seeing yourself change over time? This script uses the inbuilt iSight in your MacBook to take a photo of you each time you log in to your PC. Later, you can turn them into a movie to see yourself metamorphose over time. (Read the accompanying tutorial online — see "Hot links".)

Cornerclick 0.8 Freeware X (10.4) Universal

Use the corners of your screen to launch or switch to any program, or open a particular folder. Much more useful than the default set of actions available in OS X!

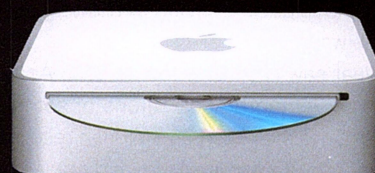


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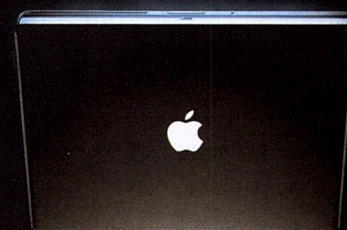
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Next Byte of the apple

ELEVEN years since its founding in 1995, retailer Next Byte has to be one of the most recognised brand names in the Australian Apple channel. By 2006, the retailer — which is also a successful education and technical services reseller — had grown from nothing to 18 stores across Australia, netting numerous channel and retail awards and swallowing some smaller companies along the way.

Last year saw Next Byte top its 2005 Apple Reseller of the Year award with yet more acquisitions of some of its prominent and successful rivals — such as Victorian reseller Desktop Power, also known as AppleCentre Ivanhoe, and AppleCentre Broadway, a one-time high sales achiever in Sydney's Glebe.



Hot Links

www.nextbyte.com.au

Next Byte

www.digitaldavinci.com.au

Digital Da Vinci

Next Byte also took over the innovative South Australian education reseller Microbits, and opened a new store in Hobart. Today it is the largest Apple reseller in Australia, with stores in every state.

So what makes Next Byte a winner? Crawford Giles, managing director at Next Byte, believes the secret is manifold: Next Byte has from the beginning aimed to position itself as a national, specialist, independent Apple reseller. "We wanted to create the ultimate Apple experience for customers," Giles says.

It's more than just being a one-stop shop. It's about having a setup in-store that lets customers not only learn about the features, benefits and look and feel of the products but actually experience them for themselves.

Changing market. That means displaying the product to the best advantage, but it also means mimicking how the customers might actually use the products and being able to demonstrate that easily. Today, that doesn't seem like such a new concept — but back in 1995 it was a rare idea.

"I think the market has changed dramatically in the last few years," Giles says. Resellers, he says, used to think of themselves as purely conduits for product. Today, the whole game has become much more sophisticated and the reseller must wear many hats and know a lot more about the products and services he or she sells.

In line with this, Next Byte tries to maintain strengths across the whole range of potential customers: the company does about 30 percent by revenue in education, corporate and retail custom. "Our business is very diversified. We have our showroom business, we have corporate account managers, and then we have education

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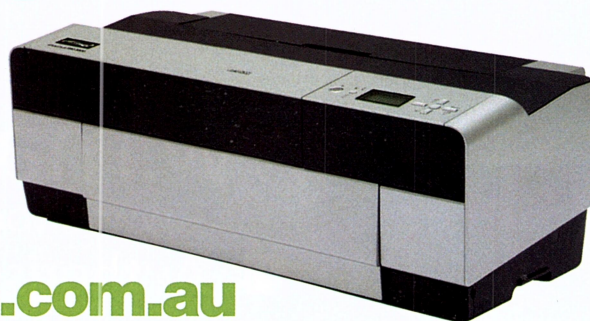
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teams all around the nation," Giles says. "And we also have a very strong services business."

The value-adds — pre- and post-sales service, technical support and training — are the areas analysts flag as growth opportunities for the Australian sales channel. Next Byte appears to have put the theory into practice.

One way of doing that is by hiring and promoting people with complementary skills. Enter the AppleCentre Ivanhoe acquisition — and boss Phil Warren. Warren was kept on and became the newest number-three director of Next Byte alongside Giles and fellow director Tim Kleemann. It's the first time Next Byte has rehired a staff member from an acquisition at such a senior level.

Says Giles: "Phil has great skills. He's a people person, he has marketing and retail expertise. His business [Desktop Power] four or five years ago was largely education-based, and he took a decision that he didn't want to play in that space and he took on AppleCentre Ivanhoe."

With the demise of AppleCentres as a strong and unified force, it stands to reason that Next Byte will manifest as flag-bearer for the Mac channel in Australia. And a vanguard is needed, for with Apple going direct in Australia it's surely more important than ever for Apple dealers to represent their own specific strengths — not only to the California-based vendor, but to the customers.

Past and future. So where did the Next Byte story begin? In 1995, Adam Steinhardt, a former elite track and field athlete, formed the company in Adelaide with a view to changing the way computers — specifically Apple computers — were sold in Australia. Kleemann came on board eight months later, and Giles in 1997.

Steinhardt, a forthright character with undeniable marketing talent, left the company 18 months ago, and Giles doesn't actually want to talk about such things. He'd prefer to focus on where the company is today and where it's going.

Steinhardt himself says the original trio — Giles, Kleemann and himself — are still good friends but he had just wanted to move on. "I was sick of it," Steinhardt says. "Sick of Apple, sick of computers in general, sick of the whole computer industry really, and it took a lot of energy.


"I had been on a bit of a crusade. We wanted to change the way computers are sold in Australia and I think we've done that, actually."

And once a crusade is finished, where do you go? "For me, it was always a case of getting to the top." Once he got there, it no longer seemed as much fun and he lost interest.

Next Byte formed a new company called Digital Da Vinci, and Adam departed to lead it. Digital Da Vinci is a four-person operation that specialises in graphic design, digital reproductions of artworks and the like, including printing books of photos from iPhoto. They work with PC-based tools as well as Apple.

"It's going really well, but it is a quite small business — not like managing 150 people every day," he laughs.

Steinhardt has nothing but praise for Giles's and Kleemann's helmsmanship since his departure. Next Byte is well-placed and should go on from strength to strength.

Giles says the next six to 12 months are earmarked for more retail innovation. Of course, he's not giving too much away. We'll just have to wait. 



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macworld.com/2353

Search Engines page

www.pozytron.com

AcidSearch

www.derailler.org/paparazzi/

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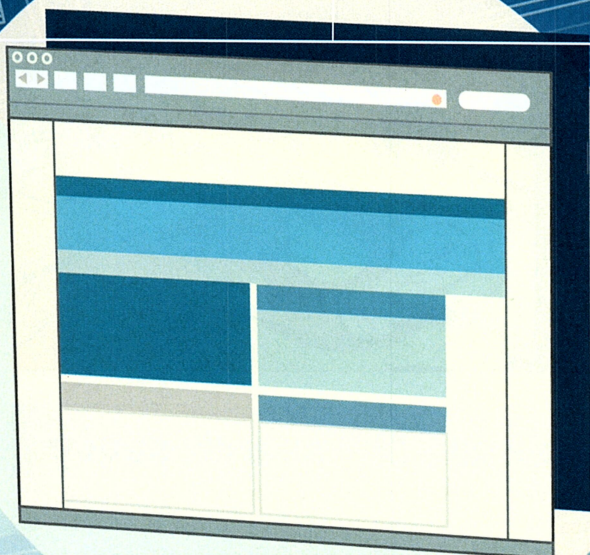
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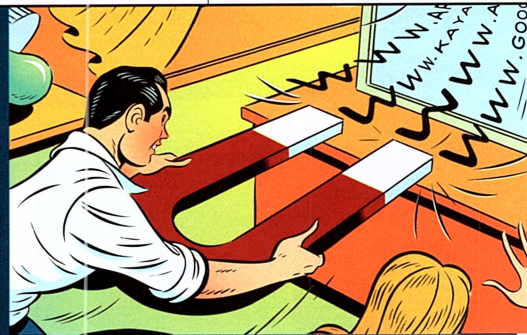
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Expand your search. Microsoft's new search site, Live Search (see "Hot links"), is a top-notch search engine that generally produces a very useful set of Related Searches links. If you search for Shane Warne, for example, you get not only 116,746 sites that mention the legendary spinner, but also, on the right side of the page, suggestions for related searches, such as Shane Warne Photo, Shane Warne First Wicket, Shane Warne Biography and, erm, Shane Warne Hair Transplant. It's a great way to find more information.

Use your local library. For specialised databases of newspaper and magazine articles (often including the articles' full text), academic abstracts, and much more, try your local library's web site (academic libraries are particularly good for this kind of thing, as are state libraries). If you're prepared to go a little non-local for a great library resource, try the New York Public Library (see "Hot links").

Find old web pages. When the page you want is no longer live, try the Wayback Machine (see "Hot links"). Search by URL, and the site gives you links sorted by the date that the Wayback Machine indexed the page. Click on a link to head to the Wayback machine's cached copy of that page. On the bottom of the Advanced Search page, you'll find tips for searching the archive, which, at press time, includes about 55 billion web pages. 

Search the right site

When you search for something specific, you don't have to use a general search engine. Here are some sites that focus on specific topics.

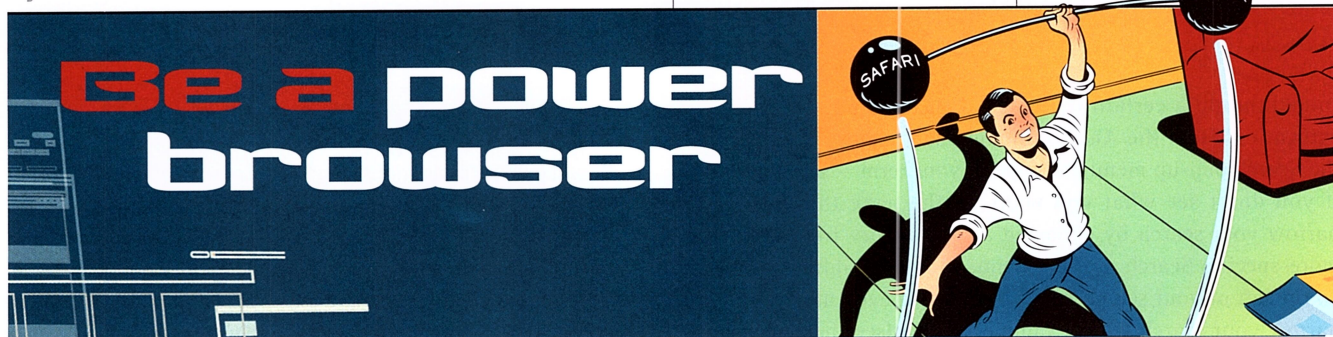
To find info about	Search here	Notes
Consumer electronics	www.retrevo.com	Get product reviews from around the web, and search inside product manuals for many gadgets.
Podcasts	www.plugged.com	Search or browse podcasts by topic. The site will also suggest podcasts you might like. (Two other great options are Podzinger.com and Odeo.com.)
Travel	www.kayak.com	Compare prices for flights, hotels, car rentals, and packages on multiple web sites at once.
Video	www.blinx.com	Search millions of hours of videos from about 75 providers, including YouTube and many other major media outlets.
Weird stuff	www.reddit.com	Search, submit, and vote on oddball sites, stories, and videos from around the web.

Four query tricks

Searching is simple, right? Just head over to a search engine, type your search term — for example, Milky Way — and press return. Within milliseconds, you're staring at a list of six trillion pages that contain your query words. Unfortunately, 99.9 percent of those pages probably aren't about your favourite galaxy. You need to filter out the flotsam. These simple yet sophisticated tricks work with nearly all search engines.

- 1. Include quotation marks.** If your search term is actually a phrase, put it in quotes, like this: "Milky Way". Doing so eliminates any pages that contain just milky or only way. This trick is also good for names ("John Howard") and lyrics ("Mary had a little lamb"), and for ensuring that your search engine doesn't ignore common and small words such as a, and, and the. Many search sites consider these words superfluous unless you specify that they're part of a phrase. So typing "to be or not to be" can get you vastly different results than to be or not to be.
- 2. Use wildcards.** A wildcard is a symbol — usually an asterisk (*) but sometimes a question mark (?) — that stands in for words or partial words you don't know. For instance, if you can't remember just what it was Mary had, enter "Mary had a little *". Your search results are likely to start with instances of Mary had a little lamb, but they could also include variations, such as Mary had a little headache. Some search engines — unfortunately, not Google — let you use a wildcard to substitute for part of a word, such as "G* Bush" — which gives you results including George Bush. The partial-word wildcard is critical when you can't remember how to spell something. Another search engine I haven't mentioned — AltaVista — lets you use that trick.
- 3. Ask an Answer.** When you have a question—"What colour is Brad Pitt's hair?" — what you really want to find is the answer. Therefore, your best bet is to search for the answer: "Brad Pitt's hair is *". (If you search for a question, you'll find pages asking the same thing.) The wildcard and quotation marks come in handy in these queries, though you may have to try a few variations, for example, "Brad Pitt has * hair" -facial.
- 4. Try an advanced search.** Almost all search engines have a form for running an advanced search (look for a link on the home page). This form lets you specify additional conditions to narrow your search. Different engines offer different options, but common choices include date ranges (good for filtering out current or stale news); domains (a nice way to narrow your search if you're looking for, say, pages from non-profit companies); and languages (if you want only sites in Farsi, this is the way to get them). Advanced search pages often let you block adult content from your results. However, this "safe searching" can occasionally block legit pages. — Sarah Milstein

By Kirk McElhearn



COUNT the number of web sites you visit daily, and you'll realise that learning even a few ways to streamline your surfing could save you loads of time.

Cut down on clicks. There's no need to click on the back arrow repeatedly when you want to return to a page that you checked out earlier. Instead, use the hidden power of the back and forward arrows. If you're using Safari 2, click and hold on either arrow to see a list of the names of the pages you've visited. (If you prefer to choose from a list of URLs, option-click and hold.) Select a page from the list to hop there right away. Press ⌘ as you select one to open the page in its own tab.

If you're using Firefox 2, click and hold on the tiny triangle next to the back or forward arrow to see a list of the pages you've browsed recently. Select one to open it, or open it in its own tab by pressing ⌘ while selecting its name. If you have a scroll-wheel mouse or an Apple Mighty Mouse, Firefox offers one more time-saver — hold down the option key and scroll down to see pages you've already viewed, or scroll up to go back through your history to more recently visited pages.

Do the time warp. The forward and back buttons can help you find pages you've visited today, but what about one you visited last week? That's a job for the History menu. Unfortunately, scrolling through that menu, and its many submenus, can be a real pain. Search your browsing history instead.

In Safari, click on the Bookmarks icon in the Bookmarks bar (it looks like an open book), select Bookmarks: Show All Bookmarks, or press ⌘-option-B. Choose History in the Collections column, and click in the search box at the bottom of the window. Type what you remember of the site's name or URL (you can even type just the end of the domain — for instance, .org). As you type more information, the list of sites will shorten.

Double-click on one to open it. If you use Firefox, select History: Show In Sidebar, or press ⌘-shift-H. You'll see a search field above a list of folders organised by day. Type into that field, and then double-click on the page you want to open.

Try show-and-tell tabs. Tabbed browsing is a great way to keep multiple pages open without making a mess of your screen. Once you have a bunch of pages open, though, their titles may not be enough to help you find the one you're looking for. OmniWeb 5 lets you navigate multiple tabs at a glance, using graphic tabs. Graphic tabs display a thumbnail of each page, as well as its title, in a drawer to the side of your browser window (see the screen-



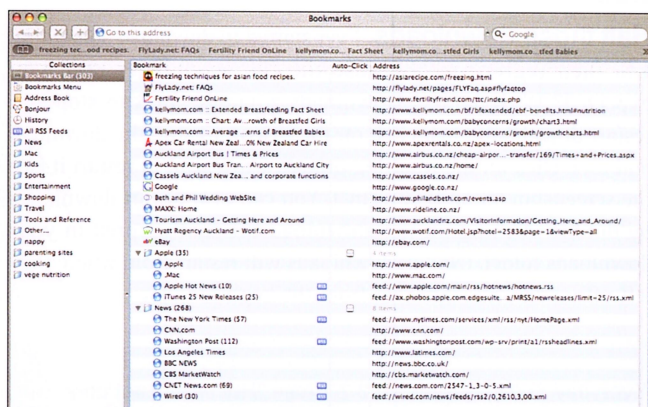
Tabs in view. OmniWeb's graphic tabs make spotting the page you want to switch to a snap. Each one is a thumbnail image of the page's actual content.

shot "Tabs in view"). Just click on a thumbnail to switch to that page, or hover your cursor over a thumbnail to view its name and full URL. You can shrink the thumbnails into simple names by clicking on the list-view icon above the drawer. In both views, press ⌘-up arrow or ⌘-down arrow to flip through the tabs.

Size it right. You probably know that you can increase the font size of squint-inducing web pages by pressing ⌘-equal sign (=) in Safari or Firefox. And you might even know that in OS X 10.4.8 (and in earlier versions if you have a Mighty Mouse), you can use the Mouse & Keyboard preference pane to improve your vision even more. Just select the Zoom Using Scroll Wheel option and then hold down the control key while scrolling to zoom in on and out from your web pages (and anything else on your screen).

OmniWeb goes one step further, allowing you to set site-specific preferences and sparing you the hassle of repeatedly adjusting the font size of a site you visit regularly. Click on the Preferences icon in the program's toolbar, and a pane opens at the bottom of the page. Here you can set font-size, image-loading, and style-sheet preferences. You can also choose from various ad-blocking and language settings.

Get the whole picture. It's a cinch to save any web page as a PDF file; just press ⌘-P, click on the PDF button in the Print dialog box, and choose Save As PDF. The only trouble is that this creates



Order from chaos. If you've got so many bookmarks that it's harder to find one than just to search for the site again, sort them into categories.

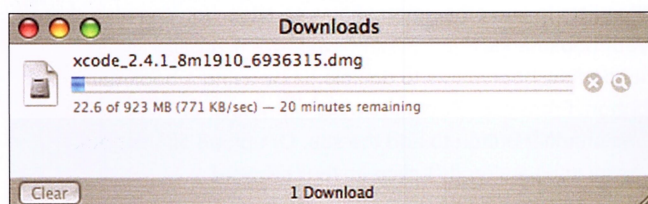
a PDF file broken into separate printable pages, not a true replica of the entire web page. What if you need an exact copy? For instance, important graphics might be cut in half by these page breaks, and web designers sometimes need to show complete pages to clients.

A hidden shortcut lets OmniWeb users save a web page as an unbroken PDF: hold down the option key and select the File menu, and then select Save As PDF. A file saved this way won't include any background graphics. To get the whole picture, try Nate Weaver and Johan Sørensen's free Paparazzi (see "Hot links"), which lets you save any web page as a PDF, JPEG, PNG, or TIFF file. Brain Tickling Software's SnapWeb 4.0 (see "Hot links") goes even further, offering additional graphic formats (GIF and PSD), text, and HTML, as well as the ability to save an image file of a page directly to the Clipboard. For PDFs, you can choose between simple images and text PDFs, which you can later search for specific words.

Organise bookmarks. Are your bookmarks a jumble of web site names in seemingly random order? Make finding the right one easier by organising them into folders (see the screenshot "Order from chaos"). In Safari, select Bookmarks: Show All Bookmarks (or press ⌘-option-B) and click either on Bookmarks Bar or on Bookmarks Window in the Collections column. Create a new folder by clicking on the plus sign (+) at the bottom of the window. Select the folder, press enter, and name it. Then drag the appropriate bookmarks into it.

Organising your bookmarks is essentially the same in Firefox 2. Select Bookmarks: Organize Bookmarks. (In earlier versions of Firefox, select Bookmarks: Manage Bookmarks.) In the window that appears, add a folder to the Bookmarks window by selecting Bookmarks in the list on the left and then clicking

Stop that train. Is that download you started too large or too slow? Click on the X icon in Safari's downloads window A to stop it. To restart it, click on the orange curly arrow that replaces the X.



on the New Folder button in the toolbar. Name the folder and then drag the appropriate bookmarks into the folder. To add a folder to Firefox's Bookmarks toolbar, create one anywhere and then click on the Move button. Choose Bookmarks Toolbar Folder in the window that appears.

Hop to the right bookmark. Sure, you can access your bookmarks from your browser's Bookmarks menu, but that requires a bunch of clicks. You can do the same from the one-click Bookmarks bar (or Bookmarks toolbar in Firefox), but it

Speed surfing

Here are some of the most useful shortcuts for Apple Safari and Mozilla Firefox. For a few of them to work in Safari you must turn on tabbed browsing by going to Safari: Preferences, clicking on Tabs and selecting the Enable tabbed Browsing option.

Action	Apple Safari	Mozilla Firefox
Open a new window	⌘-N	⌘-N
Open a new tab	⌘-T	⌘-T
Open link in new window	⌘-option-click	Shift-click
Open link in new background tab	⌘-click ¹	⌘-Shift-click
Open link in new tab	⌘-shift-click ¹	⌘-click
Stop loading page	⌘-. or Esc	⌘-. or Esc
Reload page	⌘-R	⌘-R or F5
Go back one page	⌘-[or Delete or ⌘-Left arrow	⌘-[or Delete arrow or ⌘-Left
Go forward one page	⌘-] or ⌘-Right arrow	⌘-] or ⌘-Right arrow
Open Home page	⌘-shift-H	option-Home
Select the Search field	⌘-option-F	No shortcut
Find text in page	⌘-F	⌘-F
Select next tab	⌘-shift-] or ⌘-shift-Right Arrow	Ctrl-Tab or ⌘-option-Right Arrow or Ctrl-Page Down
Select previous tab	⌘-shift-[or ⌘-shift-Left Arrow	Ctrl-shift-tab or ⌘-option-Left Arrow or Ctrl-Page Up
Add bookmark	⌘-D	⌘D
Show bookmarks	⌘-option-B	⌘B
Increase text size	⌘-plus sign (+)	⌘-plus sign (+)
Decrease text size	⌘-minus sign (-)	⌘-minus sign (-)
E-mail contents of the current page	⌘-I ²	No shortcut
E-mail link to the current page	⌘-shift-I	No shortcut
Scroll down one screen	Page Down or Space bar	Space bar
Scroll up one screen	Page Up or shift-Space bar	Shift-Space bar
Go to bottom of page	⌘-Down Arrow	End
Go to top of page	⌘-Up Arrow	Home
View Downloads window	⌘-option-L	⌘-J
View Activity window (Safari)	⌘-option-A	No shortcut

¹ These two shortcuts are reversed if you've gone to Safari: Preferences and selected the Select New Tabs As They Are Created option. ² This feature doesn't work with Microsoft Entourage

can get crowded fast. If you keep a lot of Safari bookmarks, use Spotlight (⌘-spacebar) to search for the right one. Type either the name of the bookmark or part of the URL in the Spotlight search field. Too many hits? To narrow the field, include the text kind:bookmark in your search. To open a bookmark, click on it in the Spotlight menu. Firefox users can select View: Sidebar: Bookmarks to open a drawer, to the side of the browser window, that holds a useful list of your bookmarks and a search field.

Halt those downloads. Ever started to download something and then regretted it because the file was bigger than you expected? With Safari's Downloads window, you can stop and restart downloads. Just click on the X icon to stop the download and then click on the resulting orange arrow icon to restart it (see the screenshot "Stop that train"). You can also restart downloads by double-clicking on the .download file that's stored in your downloads folder. (Not all downloads will restart from where they left off; some will start over from the beginning.)

Use bookmarks anywhere

Bookmarks serve as your electronic memory of the web. When you encounter a page you know you'll want to revisit, press ⌘-D in Safari or Firefox to add the site to the Bookmarks menu, or drag its address from the address bar to the Bookmarks bar (in Safari; the Bookmarks toolbar in Firefox). Once you've gathered important bookmarks, how can you use them on your different computers and, if necessary, in different browsers?

Sync them up. If you use many computers but just one browser, a number of tools can help you sync your bookmarks so they're the same wherever you go. Among its other features, Apple's .Mac service lets you sync your Safari bookmarks across different Macs. When you sync to .Mac from, say, your desktop Mac, you can configure your MacBook Pro to pick up the changes, so you'll have everything with you on the road. You can also access all your Safari bookmarks online, from the .Mac web site.

If you use Firefox, Foxmarks' free Foxmarks Bookmarks Synchronizer (see "Hot links") syncs your bookmarks to a special web site, my.foxmarks.com. You can then access all your bookmarks from any computer. Similarly, Google's free Google Browser Sync (see "Hot links"), lets you synchronise bookmarks, passwords, cookies, history, tabs, and windows. It can even encrypt some of your sensitive data, such as passwords and cookies.

Use a system-wide manager. If you use many different browsers, consider using a system-wide bookmark manager. Some store the bookmarks themselves, and others access the bookmarks you've saved across different browsers.

Everyday Software's BookIt 3.7.1 (see "Hot links") not only lets you work with bookmarks you've saved in each of your browsers, but also syncs bookmarks from one browser to another — so if you use different browsers, you can have the same set of bookmarks for each. You can access its bookmarks from a menu extra or from the Dock, as well as from within the program itself.

Happy Apps' WebnoteHappy (see "Hot links") organises

bookmarks from Safari, Firefox, and OmniWeb, and it lets you add tags and notes, so they're easier to find later. You can also search for names, URLs, tags, and titles. Use smart folders to sort your bookmarks by keywords.

Manage bookmarks online. If you spend a lot of time moving around and working on different computers, what could be more convenient than organising your bookmarks on the web?

Google Bookmarks and Yahoo Bookmarks (see "Hot links") both offer basic services for storing bookmarks online. Both require that you add bookmarks manually, but you can do so from any web browser on any computer (or operating system).

Take things a step further with del.icio.us. This social bookmark manager lets you add bookmarks to a personal web page, but that's just the beginning.

When you view your bookmarks, you can see how many other people have bookmarked the same pages, and then check their lists to find other interesting web sites. You can also share your bookmarks.

Add new bookmarks to del.icio.us by using a bookmarklet button. From your Bookmarks bar or toolbar, click on the bookmarklet button to add the site. Or upload all the bookmarks you've already saved in your browser.

The screenshot shows the del.icio.us website interface. At the top, it says "del.icio.us / kirkmc /" followed by "by Kirk McElhearn". Below this are links: "your bookmarks", "your network", "subscriptions", "links for you", and "post". The main section is titled "All your items (10)" and shows a list of bookmarks. Each entry includes the bookmark name, a link to "edit / delete", and a note about how many other people have saved it and when it was saved. The bookmarks listed are: "The Durutti Column - Home", "The BILL EVANS Webpages - Bill Evans, jazz piano", "The Official Home Page of Grateful Dead", "A Charles Ives Web Site", "Jean Shepherd - A Salute to Jean Shepherd", "The Walt Whitman Archive", "The Life and Works of Herman Melville", "the Ladder : a Henry James website", "The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson", and "macosxhints - Get the most from X!".

Tasty bookmarks. When you add a bookmark to del.icio.us, you can access it from anywhere. This site also helps you discover new sites by letting you see the bookmarks of other people who have bookmarked your favourite sites.

By Kirk McElhearn



WHETHER you're a news nut or just like to visit certain web sites a lot, RSS can help you easily access up-to-the-minute information.

Tweak Safari's summaries. Love the convenience of using Apple's Safari as your RSS reader, but hate ploughing through the lengthy article summaries it provides? No problem. To change the length of Safari's RSS summaries, drag the Article Length slider that appears below the Search Articles field. If you drag the slider all the way to the left, you'll see only headlines.

Keep track of feeds. One way to keep track of your RSS feeds is to save them in a folder on Safari's Bookmarks bar. When you're looking at a feed page, click on the Add Bookmark link under Actions and save the feed to the Bookmarks bar. Choose Bookmarks: Show All Bookmarks. Click on the plus sign (+) to the left of the search field at the bottom of the window. Double-click on the folder that appears and name it. Then drag your feeds into it. Choose Bookmarks: Hide All Bookmarks.

Safari totals up all the articles from all the feeds in the folder. Now you'll be able to see at a glance how many new articles are waiting for you. Click on the folder to see a number next to each individual feed's name. If you want to view all the RSS feeds, select Open In Tabs.

Try live bookmarks. Mozilla Firefox goes one step further than Safari to help you keep up with the latest headlines. Whenever you see an orange icon in Firefox's address bar, the program has detected a web page with an RSS feed. Click on this icon, and Firefox gives you the option to add a live bookmark to it. Set the Create In pop-up menu to Bookmarks Toolbar Folder, and a bookmark with an orange icon will appear in the bar below the address bar.

Click on this icon to see a list of currently available articles – not just how many there are, but their actual headlines (see the screenshot "Firefox's daily news"). New articles have an orange RSS icon, and older articles either show the site's favicon or a default site icon. Select an article to open its web page. If you'd like to read all the articles, select Open All In Tabs at the bottom of the menu.

Pump up Firefox's RSS powers. If you dislike switching to another application to check your feeds, but yearn for more features than your browser offers, two Firefox add-ons can help. The Sage Project's free Sage add-on (see "Hot links") integrates with Firefox's live bookmarks and adds feed discovery, as well

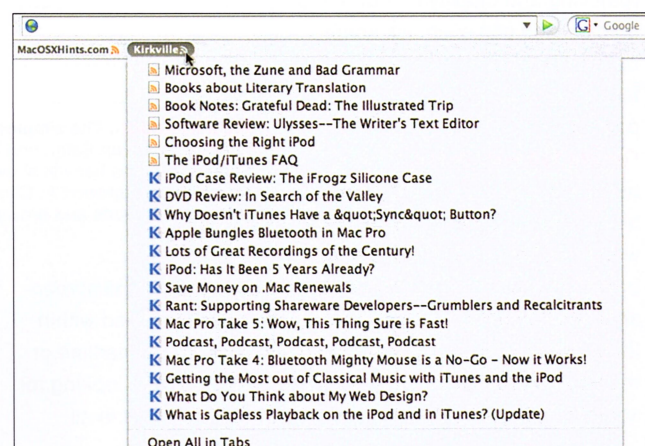
as RSS search engine powers. The InfoRSS Project's free InfoRSS supports a variety of feed types, scrolling feeds, and more.

Put RSS on your Dashboard. Like to keep your eyes on headlines from a specific site? Keep everything a key press away by downloading Dashboard widgets that keep you up-to-date on single feeds. Go to Apple's Dashboard download page (see "Hot links") and search for RSS feed. You'll find dozens of widgets here that let you keep up with your favourite football team, your favourite TV show, or your local newspaper's headlines (see the screenshot "Dashboard scores").

Share feeds. If you've spent days mining the web for the best, most up-to-date sites on a specific subject, share the fruits of your labours with interested friends. Most stand-alone RSS readers let you select the feeds and export them, using the OPML (Outline Processor Markup Language) format. Some RSS readers, such as NewsGator's NetNewsWire, even offer Bonjour sharing on a local network. In the program's Sharing preference pane, turn on sharing. Tell friends who share the network with you to open their copies of NetNewsWire, select View: Show Sites Drawer, and then click on the Shared tab. From here, they'll be able to access your feeds.

See feeds anywhere. If you're on the road a lot and want to be able to access your favourite news feeds from any computer, set up your own personal selection of feeds online. Services such

Firefox's daily news. Put a folder full of RSS feeds in Firefox's Bookmarks toolbar, and all you have to do is click to see the latest headlines.



AFL LADDER	P	W	L	D	Pts
West Coast	22	17	5	0	68
Adelaide	22	16	6	0	64
Fremantle	22	15	7	0	60
Sydney Swans	22	14	8	0	56
Collingwood	22	14	8	0	56
St Kilda	22	14	8	0	56
Melbourne	22	13	8	1	54
Wstn Bulldogs	22	13	9	0	52
Richmond	22	11	11	0	44
Geelong	22	10	11	1	42
Hawthorn	22	9	13	0	36
Port Adelaide	22	8	14	0	32
Brisbane	22	7	15	0	28
Kangaroos	22	7	15	0	28
Essendon	22	3	18	1	14
Carlton	22	3	18	1	14

Australian Football League

Club	P	W	L	B	Pts
1 Melbourne	24	20	4	2	44
2 Bulldogs	24	16	8	2	36
3 Brisbane	24	14	10	2	32
4 Newcastle	24	14	10	2	32
5 Manly	24	14	10	2	32
6 St George Illawarra	24	14	10	2	32
7 Canberra	24	13	11	2	30
8 Parramatta	24	12	12	2	28
9 North Queensland	24	11	13	2	26
10 Warriors	24	12	12	2	24
11 Wests Tigers	24	10	14	2	24
12 Penryn	24	10	14	2	24
13 Cronulla	24	9	15	2	22
14 Sydney Roosters	24	8	16	2	20
15 Souths	24	3	21	2	10

Dashboard scores. With a widget that displays sports info, you can spot the latest scores and news for the sport of your choice.

as Google Reader, Rocketinfo, NewsGator Online, and FeedLounge (see “Hot links” for all of these) offer free or fee-based RSS services on the web. For example, NetNewsWire lets you sync its feeds to the NewsGator site, so if you use this RSS reader, you are guaranteed to find the same feeds no matter where you are.

RSS 101

RSS, or Really Simple Syndication, has revolutionised the way people get information from the web. Subscribe to an RSS feed, and you no longer need to manually scan pages to spot what's changed on your favourite web site. Instead, the feed shows you what's new or updated.

Most web sites use the RSS data format to provide easy access to their stories. You can view feeds using a web browser that supports them (such as Safari 2.0 or Firefox), or a special RSS reader, which offers additional features for retrieving and displaying news and articles. You can even use some online services to organise your feeds and read them on any computer.

Get started with Safari. If you're using Tiger, you've already got a built-in RSS reader — Safari. If a web site offers an RSS feed, the browser shows an RSS icon in its address bar (see the screenshot “RSS in action”). Click on this icon to see the feed within the browser window. To read an article, click on its headline or the Read More link to jump to its web page. If you're looking for something in particular, you can search for keywords in all

Get RSS to go. If you don't have time to check out all your feeds before going to work, load them on your iPod as notes, with Kainjow's Life2Go (see “Hot links”). This program will copy your favourite RSS feeds — but only the feeds, not the articles they link to — along with a slew of other info, such as stock quotes, weather, notes, and much more. Graham Parks's RSS reader Shrook can also sync your feeds to your iPod, though it allows you to sync only all of them at once; Life2Go lets you choose exactly which feeds you put on your iPod.

Relax with the news. Can't get enough headlines? Use them as your screen saver, so you can catch up whenever you take a break. In OS X 10.4, open the Desktop & Screen Saver preference pane, click on the Screen Saver tab, and then choose RSS Visualizer from the Screen Saver column. Click on Options to pick a feed. (The list shows all the feeds you've saved in Safari.) White 3D text rotates over an aqueous background, displaying the headlines and summaries of your selected feed. If you want to read more, press the key that's specified below the text (for example, “Press the 4 key to read more”). This will open the appropriate web page in your default web browser.

available articles. To return to the normal web view, just click on the blue RSS icon in the address bar, and you'll go back to the web page you were originally viewing.

Use a dedicated reader. What if you have dozens or even hundreds of RSS feeds you want to monitor? There are plenty of dedicated RSS readers to pick from — for example, NewsGator's NetNewsWire Lite 2.1, David Watanabe's NewsFire 1.4, and Graham Parks's Shrook 2.5 (see “Hot links” for all of these). (Disclosure: Mac Publishing, the publisher of *US Macworld*, has a business relationship with NewsGator. Niche Media, publisher of *Australian Macworld*, does not.)

All allow you to subscribe to feeds, organise them, and read them in a two- or three-pane interface, similar to that of Apple's Mail. They update your feeds automatically, and some offer powerful search functions.

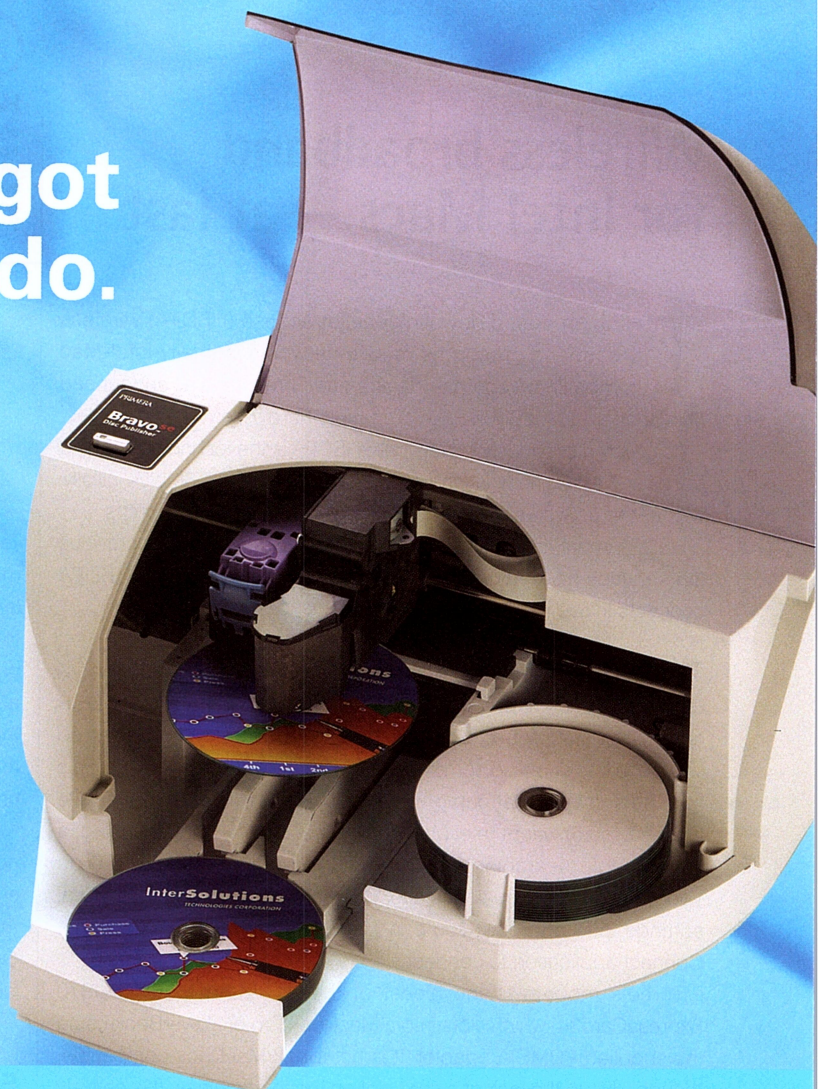
If you decide to use an RSS reader, you'll need to tell your

system. In Safari, choose Safari: Preferences and click on the RSS tab. From the Default RSS Reader pop-up menu, select the program you want to use. In Firefox, choose Firefox: Preferences and click on Feeds. Choose the Subscribe To The Feed Using option, and select your reader from the list.



RSS in action. The simplest way to see what RSS is all about is to fire up Safari and head to a site with a feed. Safari's address bar will show an RSS icon in white letters on a blue background A. Click on it to switch to Safari's RSS display mode and browse through headlines and summaries B.

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Wireless broadband for Intel Macs — at last

THE high-speed downlink packet access (HSDPA) wireless broadband offered by mobile networks is finally Intel-Mac compatible. Vodafone, Telstra and Three have all announced MacBook and MacBook Pro-compatible hardware.

As covered previously in Networth, HSDPA is the technology behind Telstra's "Next G" network and provides speeds up to 1.8Mbit/s initially, with all the networks promising even more speed within months.

HSDPA improves greatly on initial connection speed. While previous 3G services have taken 30 seconds or more to connect, HSDPA connects in five to fifteen seconds.

The modems. Vodafone's USB modem is a small business-card-sized lozenge and hangs off the side of your laptop by a USB cable. The gate-lounge-dangle-factor is obviously not ideal, so Vodafone has supplied some velcro so you can affix it to your laptop's lid. The software that came with the review unit (Vodafone Mobile Connect 2.0.5) wasn't Intel Mac compatible, but if you are cunning, a little Google searching will turn up VMC for Intel Mac 2.0.6 on Vodafone's global business site. It is only needed to set the initial settings, and after that you can just use the inbuilt OS X Internet Connect application to connect.

Three's modem is the nicest of the lot. It's a Merlin XU870 ExpressCard34, which slots into a MacBook Pro or PowerBook using the supplied PCMCIA adaptor. It is not iBook/MacBook compatible, though, due to the lack of a card slot on those machines. It is natively supported by OS X and after you install some simple settings from the CD, connection can be established via OS X Internet Connect, just like Vodafone's setup. It couldn't be simpler. It's free if you agree to a 24-month contract on a \$49 plan.

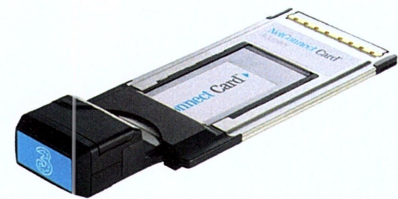
The plans

	Allowance	Speed	USB modem plan
BigPond Wireless	200MB	256K	\$49.95
	1GB	256K	\$79.95
	10 hours	Up to 1.5M	\$29.95
	20 hours	Up to 1.5M	\$49.95
	400MB	Up to 1.5M	\$79.95
	1GB	Up to 1.5M	\$109.95
Three	3GB	Up to 1.5M	\$199.95
	200MB	Up to 1.5M	\$29.00
	1GB	Up to 1.5M	\$49.00
Vodafone	2GB	Up to 1.5M	\$69.00
	100MB	Up to 1.8M	\$29.95
	300MB	Up to 1.8M	\$49.95
	1GB	Up to 1.8M	\$99.95



Hot Links

www.three.com.au
www.vodafone.com.au
www.bigpond.com
www.iburst.com.au
www.unwired.com.au
 Wireless providers



Telstra's "Next G" modem, made by Australian company Maxon, is miraculously small: it's the size of a large memory stick (ok, a very large one) and it plugs into a spare USB slot. Telstra's software is not Intel Mac compatible but the telco says it is working closely with Apple on driver development and hopes to have a solution very soon. It is also evaluating an ExpressCard with native driver support in OS X from the company that makes its PCMCIA cards (Belgian firm Option) and that may be a preferable solution for MacBook Pro users who are happy to wait and would prefer less protrusion.

Optus does not offer a Mac-compatible wireless broadband service, nor has it announced its plans for HSDPA yet. The reason it doesn't support Mac is because its service is considerably more complex than the others — it offers WiFi access across hundreds of Azure and Optus hotspots as well as 3G, and a software package figures out which is the fastest service available wherever you are.

However, it is rumoured that Optus has Mac software in beta.

Finding the best deal. Unlike wired broadband, getting the best value from a wireless broadband plan isn't mostly about cost —





it's mostly about coverage. If you can't get coverage, you can't even use the service, no matter how fast or cheap it is.

Telstra has the clear advantage here. Its "Next G" network is one of the largest mobile networks in the world, and the whole thing is running on HSDPA, so you'll never drop back to sub-dialup speeds like on the other networks. Telstra is undeniably pricey, but it's also a quality service.

I found with other carriers I could often get signal in suburban areas, but the speed dropped back to regular 3G (about 300Kbit/s) or, worse, GPRS, which is sub-dialup and frankly useless for anything except emergency e-mail checking.



For people who mainly want wireless broadband because they connect to hotspots a couple of times a month anyway, the \$29.95 plan with 10 hours of usage from Telstra BigPond Wireless is pretty good. For anyone on the road who needs internet access most of the time (and can restrain themselves from downloading multimedia) the 1GB plan for \$109.95 is worth checking out.

Anyone who needs wireless broadband for work in densely populated areas should look at Three — its plans are among the cheapest, with 2GB going for just \$69. However, if you drop out of Three's coverage and roam over to Telstra GPRS, you pay \$1.65 per megabyte. On Mac, there's no way of knowing when that happens either (apart from the bog-slow speed of GPRS) so you could end up running up a nasty bill.

Three is obviously tired of reviewers saying this, because it now includes (literally) a few megabytes of Telstra roaming usage in all plans. Hey — it's a gesture of goodwill even if it means bugger-all in protecting you from bill shock.

Given that Vodafone is only a bit cheaper than Telstra, we can't really recommend it given Telstra's substantially better coverage. ☹

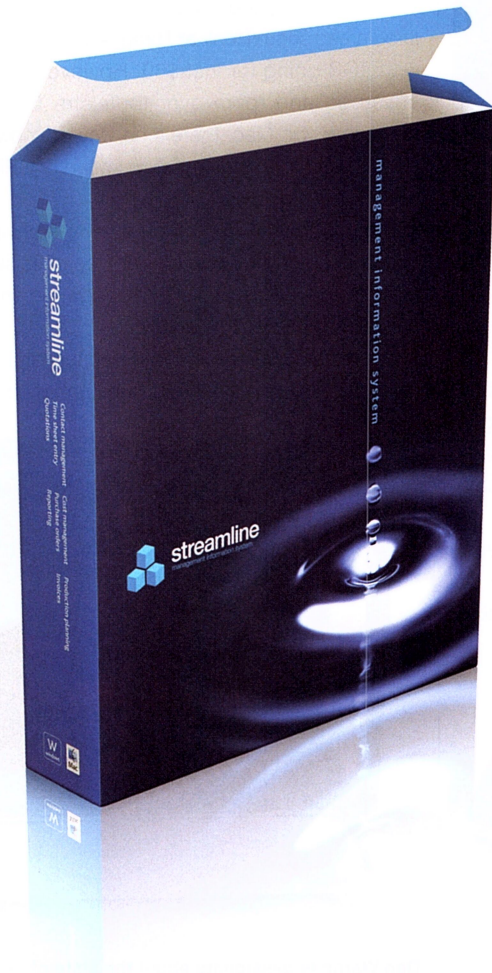


Dan Warne is passionate about the state of broadband in Australia.

Wireless network jargon buster

Data network	Network	Speed	Good or not?
EVDO	Telstra CDMA	Around 600Kbit/s	Superseded by Telstra Next G and soon to be shut down.
EDGE	Telstra GSM (2G)	Around 200Kbit/s	Faster latency than WCDMA 3G, which means more responsive web browsing etc. Not as fast as HSDPA but supported by more mobile handsets.
UMTS	Telstra/Three, Optus/Voda WCDMA 3G	Around 300Kbit/s	Sluggish latency. It's like slightly faster dialup. Superseded on all networks except Optus by HSDPA.
HSDPA	Telstra Next G, Three, Vodafone WCDMA 3G	Around 1Mbit/s, (network can do 3.8Mbit/s but current modems can only do 1.8Mbit/s max. Telstra will upgrade in Q1 2007 to 14.4Mbit/s network and 7Mbit/s cards)	Much improved latency — feels closer to "wireless ADSL". Telstra has by far the best coverage (98 percent of population) and is aided by the non-standard low frequency it uses — 850MHz — which has good range and in-building penetration.
Navini Ripwave	Unwired	Around 1Mbit/s	Coverage limited to Sydney and Melbourne. Many user reports of dropouts and difficulty getting coverage.
iBurst	Personal Broadband Australia	Around 1Mbit/s	Coverage limited to metro Sydney, Melbourne, Gold Coast, Brisbane, Canberra and inner suburbs.

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Paul Fairbairn - Managing Director - Imagic

"The time savings have allowed Q to focus on the areas of the business that people value. To be creative and not to focus on account and back end detail which Streamline has eliminated."

Daryl Peterson - Production Manager - Q Brand Agency



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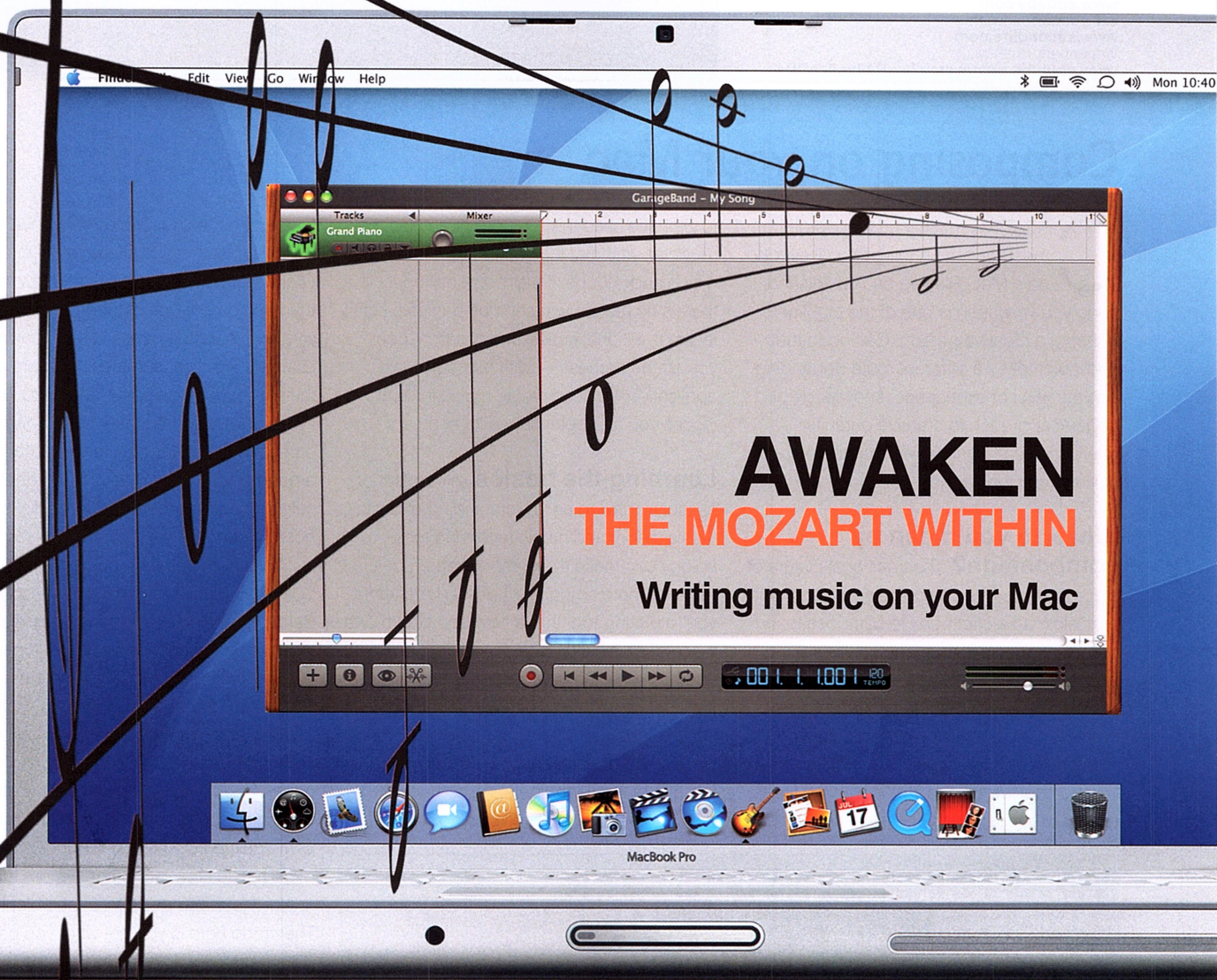
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By David Holloway



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www.pgmusic.com
 Band in a Box 12
www.sibelius.com
 Sibelius 4
www.finalemusic.com
 Finale 2007
www.notionmusic.com/
 Notion 1.5
www.apple.com.au/garageband
 GarageBand
www.propellerheads.se
 Reason 3
www.ableton.com
 Live 6
www.myspace.com
 Free hosting of your music
www.soundclick.com
 More free hosting
www.cdbaby.com
 Sell your work online
www.secondlife.com
 Virtual performance
www.youtube.com/watch?v=R44vp4zeDU8
 Suzanne Vega performs virtually



Composing on your Mac

CREATING music can be one of the most rewarding things you'll ever do on a Mac. Playing back a finished song you've written is one of the highlights of being a creative person. Getting to that end-point takes a different route depending on your level of experience, knowledge and general approach to creative pursuits. There's no one right answer but there are some road signs to help you along the way.

What do you mean by composition?

The traditional picture of a composer is of a person using a pencil and a music manuscript book to compose for an orchestra or solo instrument. This is still an approach used today with great success. The reality is, however, that the majority of music created in the past fifty years has used a much more informal approach, whether it be a band improvising in a studio with the tape recorder running (everyone from the Beatles

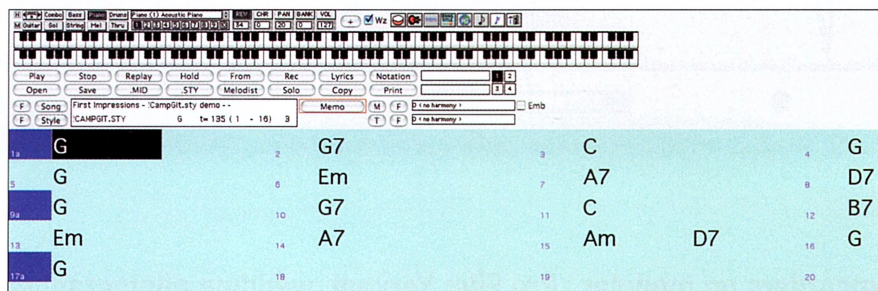
to U2 have used this method) or an electronic musician sitting at their computer slicing and dicing audio loops. It's all composition, and there's no reason you can't be part of it. Don't let the traditional image of a composer put you off the process — with a basic music application, you can create music that can inspire you and potentially a lot of others.

Learning the basics. Although not essential, having an understanding of basic music theory and music recording technology can make the composition process run a lot more smoothly. It doesn't matter if you're putting together a new age album or a piece of musical theatre, the underpinnings are the same. Computer-based recording is a comparatively new area and some of the knowledge around MIDI and audio composition can be daunting at best. To combine the two, it's really worth spending some time doing some reading and listening.

One of the most respected reference points is Paul Gilreath's *The Guide to MIDI Orchestration* (see "Hot links"). Now in its third edition, it's one of the most comprehensive and readable books on composing using MIDI and/or samples. It covers everything from composing for games to the note ranges of each instrument in a traditional orchestra. It provides a broad education around basics as well as more in-depth tutorials for particular compositional tasks. It's not a cheap read — upwards of \$130 in Australia from specialty suppliers or \$US79.95 plus shipping from Amazon or Barnes and Noble. It's money very well spent though if you want a solid grounding.

If composing for film is your interest, *The Reel World: Scoring for Pictures* by Jeff Rona (available from a range of Australian book-sellers for around \$39) is an excellent starting point. *Jazz Composition and Orchestration* by William Russo (around \$170 in Australia from some online bookstores) requires a little more music knowledge but is more than useful if jazz composition is the objective. The credo here is you get what you pay for. "Learn rock guitar in ten easy steps" just won't fit the bill for writing music.

Composition tools — scoring/MIDI/Audio. If you can read music or play an instrument well, then a



music-scoring package can be a very rewarding way to compose. A scoring package revolves around the traditional sheet music layout and the staves are filled by either playing an attached MIDI instrument or by entering notes using your mouse and keyboard: the technology equivalent of a sheet music pad and a pencil. There are three packages worth taking a look at: Finale, Sibelius and Notion. Finale and Sibelius are the two heavyweights with Notion the new contender.

Finale is the longest serving scoring package of the big three. Finale 2007 brings a range of feature additions. First, Finale is now Universal Binary which will bring some performance improvements to Intel Mac users — though be aware that the bundled Kontakt Player that supplies the default sounds is not Universal Binary. A number of the new features in the 2007 version are catch-ups with Sibelius, particularly the linked parts (which Sibelius terms dynamic parts) — this feature allows you to change one part and have it update the whole score or vice versa. The proprietary Human Playback feature has been further enhanced and allows you to select a range of styles to take the mechanical feel out of the playback. Since the 2006 version a sound-set based on the Garritan Professional Instruments package has stood Finale in good stead, with further Garritan or Native Instruments sounds available to be added. To me, Finale is still a very worthy and comprehensive package but the heavy Windows feel remains. That said, it arguably has the fullest feature set of all the scoring packages, so if you intend to create some complex music

then it may be your best pick. Finale 2007 will cost you \$895 (\$349 Academic) and is distributed by AusMidi (02 9542 4105).

Sibelius took a major evolutionary step with the release of version 4 just over a year ago, and other packages like Finale have had to play catch-up ever since. The most striking feature of Sibelius — after using Finale in particular — is how OS X oriented it is. It looks great and the workflow is intuitive if you've used OS X for a while. On the feature side, one standout for me is the mistake-checking plugin — it's the musical equivalent of a spell-checker and it's a godsend. Cut and paste into Microsoft Word is an option and over 1700 worksheets are supplied — which is particularly handy if you're teaching others to compose or involved in a group composition. Like Finale, Sibelius has a built in sound-set or you can configure it to utilise your current MIDI sounds. Pro Tools users may want to take an even closer look at Sibelius now that it's owned by Avid, which also owns Digidesign. At time of writing, version 7.3 of Pro Tools had been announced with direct Sibelius support. Sibelius is \$895 (\$495 Academic) and is distributed by Sibelius itself (08 8277 1722).

Notion is the relative newcomer, but its feature set packs a large punch. It covers all the traditional scoring bases and a lot of time has been taken with the sample library provided with Notion. The sounds are superb, with the London Symphony Orchestra involved in the recording. It doesn't have the number of features that Finale or Sibelius do, but it has more than enough for both the beginning and intermediate composer, particularly if you don't have a large sound library to

work with at present. Notion retails for \$US599 (\$US399 Academic) with there still not being an Australian distributor — online purchase only unfortunately (see "Hot links").

Finale, Sibelius and Notion all have demonstration versions available for download. I've used all three and all have their strengths and weaknesses. Notion's orchestral sound libraries impress, but Sibelius and Finale are no slouches either in that regard. Finale is still the benchmark for scoring professionals, but Sibelius is easier to use and with Version 4 its integration with video and OS X-like interface make it hard to go past.

Band-in-a-Box (BIAB) is a veteran of MIDI composition and is a great sketchpad for experienced composers as well as an excellent learning resource for anyone wanting to start composing without a lot of music theory backing them up. BIAB takes the approach of being a backing band, with you as the front-person. You choose the style and tempo of the song you want to create, say a country shuffle song at 114 beats per minute. That's all BIAB needs to create a full arrangement for you — albeit a constant drone of one chord. Then you compose your song. To enter the chord structure, no detailed musical knowledge is needed. For example, typing D is all you need to do to create a D Major chord. Typing Dm gets you D Minor. Experiment with different combinations until you have a song structure you like. You can then enter a melody line, record yourself singing the vocal, or create a solo on any MIDI track by using the soloist feature. It's all exportable as MIDI data to other applications for further work if needed. Band in a Box will cost you \$169 with reduced upgrade pricing available. The Australian distributor is Intellware (02 9981 8088) and a demo version is available for download — there's even an OS 9 version.

GarageBand is also a more than adequate composition tool, and it happily deals with both audio and MIDI. If you're really not interested in music notation at all but prefer to use loops and phrases as building blocks to a complete song, then GarageBand may be all you'll need. If you grow out of GarageBand then the upgrade path to Logic Express and Logic Pro is well laid out and applications like Reason and Ableton Live (see "Hot links") cater to different composition approaches again.



Composition resources — getting heard.

Prior to the widespread use of the internet, it was safe to say that the hardest part of being a composer was getting your work heard. This has essentially turned around 180 degrees — the hardest part now is creating good music. There's an enormous audience out there clamouring for anything that sounds different and you can get heard for next to no financial outlay.

One of the easiest ways to host your music online is also free and has the biggest potential audience: MySpace. Chances are either you, or a person you know under the age of twenty-five, has a MySpace account. Worldwide, over 110 million people will have registered accounts by the time you read this. Registration just requires a valid e-mail address (free ones like Gmail and Yahoo are fine) and some basic personal details.

A very important point: when registering make sure you sign up for a MySpace Music account, otherwise you won't be able to host your songs. To do so, click on the Music link on the home page (see "Hot links") then click on the Artist Signup link.

Building a following on MySpace involves getting people added to your site as "friends", which then links you to an enormous number of other MySpace pages. On my MySpace page I have 160 or so

friends added — and each of those friends would have at least one hundred friends on their own pages. This means that I have around sixteen thousand people two clicks away from my music.

The reality of course is that there's limited time for anyone to listen to new music and I've had 900 views of my page and 700 plays in total of the three songs I've uploaded. Getting more interest requires a time commitment to build your friends and to promote your MySpace page wherever you frequent online or in real life.

There are other musician-specific sites designed as platforms to promote your music. Soundclick is one of the longer surviving sites, offering both free and paid accounts. The free account is quite generous — there's no limit on the number of MP3s of your work you can upload, you get a free mailing list and the obligatory band page.

If you have an album's worth of material, then have a close look at CD Baby — it's been around since 1998 and sells your album as part of a 160-thousand-plus artist roster. CD Baby takes a 9 percent cut of sales — the rest is yours.

Finally, you can actually have your work appear in the iTunes Store catalogue — next month I'll show you how, for minimal cost.

Out there — virtual performance.

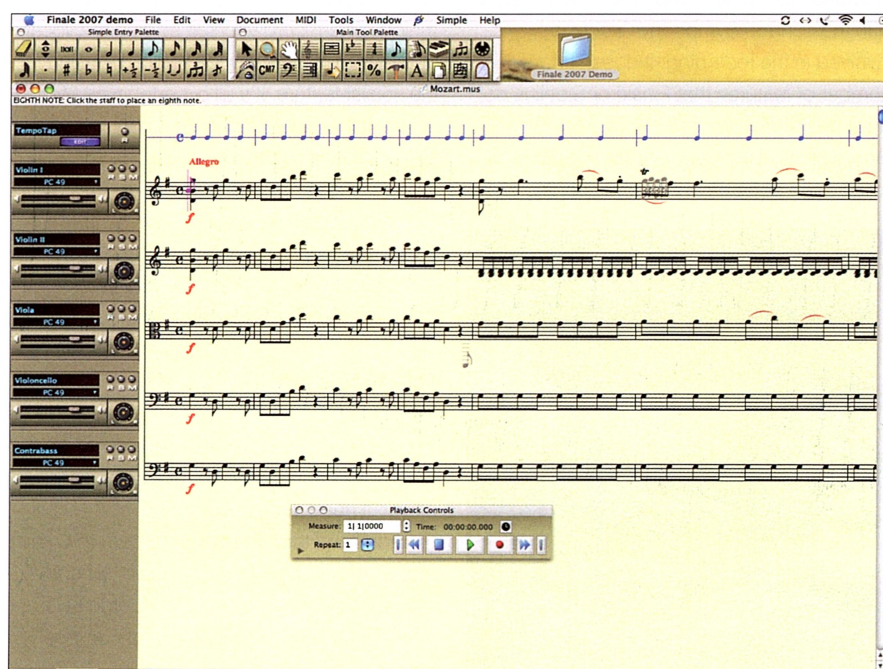
If you want to take your music beyond a web site presence, then give some serious thought to one of the biggest growth internet phenomena:

Second Life. It's a virtual 3D world that looks a little like a game of The Sims. The whole point is to interact with others "in-world", whether it be a BBQ in your backyard or a trivia night held by a community group. Music performance has taken off as a pastime in Second Life, and it gives anyone the opportunity to have their music heard. Major recording artists such as Suzanne Vega and Ben Folds have performed in-world (see "Hot links") with a number more scheduled in coming months.

If you think you might be interested in exploring it further, here's how:

- ◆ Register to play Second Life (see "Hot links"). Registration is free, you just need to download the software. (Check the system specifications before downloading as only certain graphics cards are supported. That said, I've seen it work perfectly fine on a PowerBook G4 that was over three years old.)
- ◆ Spend the time completing the orientation component of the game — you'll save yourself a lot of grief in the longer term.
- ◆ Use the search tab to search for music events — these are occurring all the time in a range of musical genres.
- ◆ Don't let the nature of the experience put you off — I found it took me a couple of sessions in the game before my head adjusted to the whole concept.
- ◆ If you come across someone called Lowell Cremorne, say hi and tell him how much you enjoy reading his work in *AMW*!

Wrap-up. It's never been easier or cheaper to compose music and have it heard and (hopefully) appreciated. Like photography or film-making, there are no short cuts to creating a quality product. Spend the time understanding what it is you're wanting to create, don't be shy in re-working things and always get an objective opinion where you can — there's no shortage of them to be found amongst musicians online or in real life. At the end of all that you may have something that you can truly call your composition, and that's nothing short of special. 🎧





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By Anthony Caruana

**Hot Links**

www.crumpler.com.au
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www.targus.com/AU
 Bag makers

Taking it with you

ONE of the problems facing today's students is that they're living in a transitional time. While many students carry a notebook computer, they still need textbooks. I've been road-testing backpacks, satchels and other handy cases to see which case or combination of cases is best for different students.

Crumpler Considerable Embarrassment.

There's nothing embarrassing about this satchel — it's a stunner. The sample I reviewed was race-car red and easily accommodated my 15-inch PowerBook. The notebook is secured with a thick Velcro flap and the entire bag can be closed with two clips and two wide sections of Velcro.

There are two other sections in the bag — one zips closed and the other uses yet more Velcro. It lacks the substantial padding of other satchels and backpacks so, while it's able to carry a decent load, your laptop isn't as protected from heavy bumps.

The Considerable Embarrassment is light, water resistant, comfortable to carry and easily accommodates a laptop and power supply, a couple of decent textbooks, some papers and other bits and pieces such as pens and a mobile phone. It retails for \$130.



STM Alley. Coming in 13-inch and 15-inch versions, the STM Alley is a great looking bag designed those who like to travel light. It definitely isn't intended as a carry-all.

Weighing a mere 700g, the Alley is designed for students that use their laptop most of the time and carry a few papers and other items of stationery. There are three other compartments, but they're quite thin and would only be able to hold more paper or some cables.

At \$80, the Alley is within most budgets. For times when I don't need to carry much gear, I'd use the Alley although I wouldn't be able to have it as my only bag.

STM Sports 2. If you're looking for a backpack that's comfortable to carry and can hold plenty of books, papers and other gear then STM's Sports 2 might just fit the bill.

Made of polyester, the Sports 2 feels very strong and would survive being dragged around the schoolyard. As well as securely holding my 15-inch PowerBook in its own section, there's plenty of room for a couple of text books and a second compartment with pouches for pens, a PDA and other bits and pieces.

The Sports 2 is comfortable to wear, with a padded back section to protect you from the corners of heavy books that might poke against the back of the bag.

At \$130 the Sports 2 offers excellent protection for your laptop, holds plenty of gear and is very comfortable.

STM Evolution. Like the Sports 2, the Evolution is designed to carry your laptop and a decent stash of books and papers. Unlike the Sports 2, when your laptop is in the Evolution it's hidden — a handy feature if you ever leave your bag unattended.

If you plan to carry the Evolution in the rain you'll love the waterproof cover hidden in a compartment on the base of the bag. Simply pull it out and over the backpack and your kit will be protected against the elements. The main body is made of polyester and the

stitching feels very solid. The shoulder straps and waist belt can accommodate most people from primary school age up and the back is padded for extra comfort.

The Evolution retails for \$150.

Targus Feren. The Feren is a great-looking backpack with plenty of space for your laptop, papers, books and other bits and pieces. There's even an insulated pocket to keep your lunch fresh on warmer days and specific compartments for sunglasses, MP3 players and your mobile phone.

The shoulder straps and waistband have plenty of capacity for adjustment and are able to accommodate primary age students through to adults. The padded back helps keep the wearer comfortable, although it does feel a little heavy.

The Feren retails for \$150 and offers plenty of protection for your laptop and room for lots of other gear.

Crumpler Mahoubar, Hymn and Thirsty. If you're looking for a huge backpack then the Mahoubar is for you. There aren't any cute little compartments — just a cavernous space. There's a single zipped pocket inside the bag, but otherwise the Mahoubar keeps things very simple. At \$190 the Mahoubar is quite expensive, but it's able to hold more than just about any other pack on the market.

As the Mahoubar lacks compartments for carrying smaller items, I recommend a couple of other Crumpler accessories to go with it.

To protect your laptop, look at a Crumpler School Hymn. At around \$75, the Hymn safely cocoons your laptop in a solid case made of hard plastic encased in PVC.

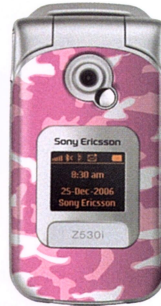
Crumpler's Thirsty is a great little utility pouch. Coming in three different sizes, this \$20 case can be used for a PDA, camera or a small, portable hard drive.

Although the full kit will set you back close to \$300, by combining the Hymn and Thirsty with the Mahoubar, you'll have a very flexible travel pack that can satisfy the needs of just about any student or traveller. 📁



Hot Links

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Contact in camouflage

It wasn't so long ago that a mobile phone with net access, Bluetooth and MP3 player was considered high-end and out of reach for the average consumer. A lot's changed over the last couple of years. The Sony Ericsson Z530i ticks the boxes on most of the features today's phone user expects — although a few corners have been cut.

The compact styling fits comfortably in most pockets. As with most flip-phones, there's an external screen that alerts you to the incoming caller ID and messages although it's a low-resolution monochrome unit. The internal screen uses large icons, but the resolution isn't high. This means that photos or videos that are taken with VGA camera aren't shown at their best until you move them to a computer.

The MP3 player is easy to use although the internal memory will only hold about half a dozen tracks. You'll want to bolster that through the memory card slot. Like many Sony Ericsson phones it uses one of the variants on the Memory Stick format — in this case it's the Memory Stick Micro.

The Bluetooth in the Z530i can be used for transferring photos to your Mac, using the phone as a modem giving you remote GPRS connectivity to the internet and for syncing your PIM data to the phone using iSync. My testing found that the pairing process was easy.

If you're only making a few calls each day you can figure on about three days of battery life. Regular use of Bluetooth will impact that significantly.

Boost Mobile, an Optus reseller, offers the Z530i for just \$179 on a pre-paid plan that's excellent value for students. The package also includes a set of headphones and \$5 of call credit. The plan can be unlocked by either paying an \$80 fee, using \$80 of services or if you've had it for over six months.



Hot Links

www.lge.com.au
LG Electronics

Pretty in Pink

If you're looking for a really basic mobile and connecting to your Mac isn't a priority, then the LG KG220 might fit the bill. At just 73g and a touch over 8cm long it's small enough to fit into any pocket. The screen's on the small side but the icons and text are large enough to read.

The camera takes reasonable snaps and you can send pictures to friends using MMS and there's internet connectivity over GPRS.

The LG KG220, repackaged in Barbie-doll colours as "PrettyNPink," is available through several carriers on pre-paid for around \$99.



Hot Links

www.apple.com/au/ical
More about iCal
www.microsoft.com/mac
More about Entourage and the Project Center

Stay organised

THERE are plenty of ways students can get more from their laptop and PDA. **Give things names.** Both iCal and Entourage allow you to assign categories to your PIM data.

In Entourage, when you create an entry to do with school or university, click the Categories button on the toolbar. Use the Edit Categories option to create a new category and assign it a colour. That way the

items for each subject you're studying will be colour-coded, making it easier to read. The categories created in your calendar can also be applied to contacts and tasks.

In iCal, create a separate calendar for each subject. Again the colour-coding will help with tracking what work you've got on the go. Address Book doesn't have categories, but by adding a note to your school or uni contacts, you can create a Smart Group to find the contacts easily. Just go to File > New Smart Group. Name the Smart Group and set the selection criteria.

Project confidence. If you're using Entourage 2004, you can take advantage of the Project Center. This is a nifty way to pull together e-mail, contacts, calendar items and files into a convenient single point.

Open the Project Center and hit the New Project button. Follow the wizard, assigning a name for the project, end date (the end of semester could be suitable) and a colour for PIM items. Set a folder on your system for all the project's documents to be stored. The Project Center will monitor the folder for new files.

If e-mail relating to the project is likely to include certain words in the subject of come from specific people, Project Center can collate that for you if allow it to create some simple rules. Just specify the criteria when the wizard prompts you.

Once that's done, you'll have a single place to see all your documents, calendar, e-mail and tasks relating to a specific subject or project.

By Séamus Byrne



Hot Links

www.red.com
The Red One

What is the Red One?

HOW would you like a video camera that can support 720p, 1080i, 1080p, 2K, 4K video formats, without needing the backing of a organised crime selling a few organs to the black market? One option is to wait until late next decade, but Red Digital Cinema (RDC) is hoping its exciting new camera, The Red One, could be what we are all waiting for.

The heart of the Red One is Mysterium, an advanced 12-Megapixel CMOS sensor sized to match Super 35mm film. This gives an active pixel array of 4520x2540, giving a maximum capture resolution of something that is actually greater than 4K, known as 2540p, or 4K+. This is such advanced digital technology it is really pushing the bounds of what has been defined as standards in resolution.

If this were just a story of an ultra-high-definition camera, it wouldn't necessarily get so much buzz. Add the fact that RDC aims to make the camera available at prices far lower than anything of comparable quality, with an initial camera packages available for pre-order from \$US27,000 (though these prices aren't certain beyond that initial pre-order period, which closed in October 2006), and it becomes a serious threat to the status quo.

Even more intriguing is the Red One's wildly configurable nature. The camera is designed to be put together, physically, in whatever way suits the user, with a variety of accessories and add-ons for the camera to be used in many different ways. This means one camera can be re-purposed to suit loca-

tion, studio, or more unorthodox shooting needs. The core unit itself is quite small, allowing it to be mounted into small configurations while still having all the power it needs for large shoots, with interchangeable lenses for short and long range operation.

There is a lot more to the concept, which makes for a great read at the official RDC web site. If all this turns out to be the real deal, it will be an amazing step forward in digital cinema, bringing capture quality on par and beyond that of 35mm film stock to any serious filmmaker, even those on minimal budgets.

Working with the capture format, Redcode, should be quite good for Mac users, as RDC has indicated it will work with any QuickTime-compatible application. Quite good, but it will demand a very well specced machine — such as a Mac Pro at 3GHz with 4GB RAM.

Pinch yourself. Of course, it is so exciting that you can't dismiss the thought it could be snake oil. The team behind the technology seems to be the real deal, having been founded and backed by Jim Jannard, founder of the Oakley eyewear company and known to be a keen photographer. That means serious corporate pedigree and real financial muscle.

The Red One should begin to arrive in a more substantial way over the course of 2007. For those with the funds, get ready for something special. For those without, the good news is that there is already some competition coming down the line, though



none as yet with the same quality promised. Hopefully this will translate to a faster drop in price and accessibility for true cinema-grade digital technology.

Red One accessories

Here are some of the announced accessories, showing the diversity of use in store for this impressive camera:

Red-Rail. A system allowing shoulder-mounted use.

Red-Cage. A system with many mounting points, suiting studio work, and giving points for many additional accessories to be attached at the same time.

Red-Gun. This lets you mount the camera on your arm, pointing it out and shooting like a gun.

Red-Flash. A solid-state memory magazine in sizes from 32GB to 128GB.

Red-Drive. A hard drive expandable storage magazine.

Digital monitor. The Red One has no optical viewfinder, but a small monitor can be added to the configuration wherever it will best suit the user.

Effects after effects

A N important update to After Effects is now available for download.

Quite a few fixes for various minor issues — minor, but very annoying — that should get everyone sailing smoothly once more. Fixes include solving bugs that

caused the application or visualisations to disappear when resizing or restoring from hidden, and pixel ratios will now be correct for imports of DVCPProHD data captured in Final Cut Pro 5.

Apart from the fixes, Adobe is also offering some enhancements and improvements. Blackmagic users can now import 8-bit YUV AVI files, and a number of

interactivity effects are going to get a better finish.

The update is a 12MB download from the Adobe web site.



Hot Links

www.adobe.com/products/aftereffects
After Effects



Hot Links

www.sony.com.au
Sony. Bony.

The definition of Sony



TWO years ago, Sony delivered 1080i for the masses with its FX1. The FX7 sees Sony arrive at phase two of its high-definition Handycam revolution. The big change? The whole range is now focused around the ClearCMOS imaging system, leaving the CCD behind.

In this case, it is a 3CMOS system, one for each of the RGB colour channels, much the same as a 3CCD arrangement. Sony has championed this shift to CMOS, which has otherwise been considered primarily the domain of high-end digital still cameras. Historically, it was deemed to have questionable quality at high frame rates, but these Sony Handycams show it has a lot to offer video today. The imaging on the FX7 looks smooth and vibrant.

The FX7 comes in cheaper than the FX1, and it seems to follow a similar line to when the HC3 replaced the HC1. In that instance, the update was a simplification in some respects, which brought the price down. Some new features were added, but it was

generally seen as repositioning the HC line as a true point-and-shoot offering.

The FX7 doesn't go quite that far, but it is certainly a more compact camera than the FX1. There is a very slight drop in effective pixels and the chips are quarter-inch rather than third-inch, but these changes don't appear to cause any perceptible dramas for the quality of the image.

Big gains in this model include a 20x optical zoom over the FX1's 12x, as well as the inclusion of optical image stabilisation to ensure you get the best out of that extra range. Add to this a new Smooth Slow Record mode, which allows six seconds of recorded footage to play back over 24 seconds. Sports fans, your amateur analysis unit is ready!

You also get HDMI output, so consider the FX7 nicely compatible with the latest in high definition screens and any future inclusion in computer-camera interfaces (with bandwidth of 10.2Gbps available, that shouldn't be too long).

The HDR-FX7 retails for \$5499.



Hot Links

www.youtube.com
It's the tube. With you.

Quick Capture to YouTube

WHEN you are not trying to produce some high definition netcast, you might just want to quickly send a little video message to friends or family via the web. The proliferation of bedroom video diaries on YouTube has been taken to heart by the web site, because it now makes it easier than ever to put something raw and simple up for all the world to see.

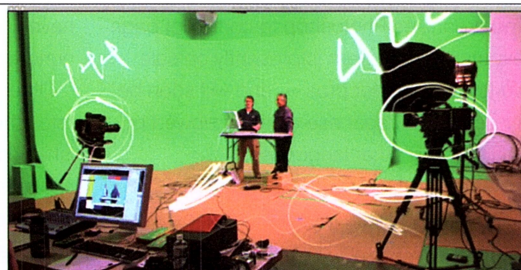
The new Quick Capture facility can be found in the YouTube upload area, and it allows you to record a video directly into the site. No initial capture or conversion, no edits, no outputs. Just click and away you go. This is a perfect match for all the latest MacBooks and iMacs with their built-in web cameras.

It is devised to work from web cams specifically, though if your video camera has a webcam mode, which some do, then you will be able to use yours in this way. You just fill out the standard title, description and tag areas, add a video category and you are ready to record.

The only question is, what do you have to say to the world? And will anyone care to watch?



Hot Links
www.twit.tv/MB
Mac Break



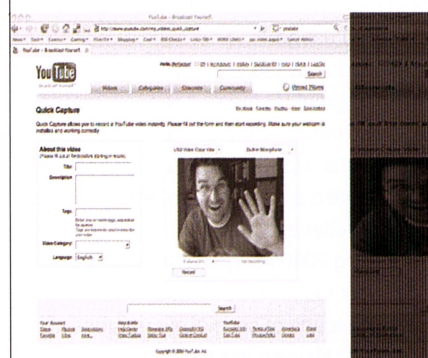
Mac Break and the road to 1080p

If you have yet to check it out, *Mac Break* is an interesting exercise in netcasting. It helps to break the use of the term podcast, being focused on delivering a Mac video show in 1080p — hardly iPod friendly. In itself, *Mac Break* is a nice show, but now the producers have incorporated a number of episodes that offer insight into how they put it all together.

Apart from the obvious "with access to really amazing gear", the details on how to produce something with serious production values gives a nice look into the entire video process when producing quality high definition in a studio.

It is all produced on Macs, of course, so it is a perfect fit for any Mac video amateurs or aficionados to learn a few new tricks.

Well worth a look for any Mac fan, but especially for those of us who spend a lot of time fooling around in Final Cut.



By Barrie Smith



Hot Links

www.yervant.com

One of the top wedding photographers in the world

www.yervant.com.au

Page Gallery software

Pro File: Yervant

JUST about everyone possessing some skill with a camera has been asked to shoot a wedding — but nobody shoots a wedding quite like Melbourne pro Yervant and his team.

When he began shooting fully digital about ten years ago, opposition photographers described Yervant as "very good, but he uses digital". These days Yervant and his team shoot digital but supply the clients with photographic prints in the form of elaborate books.

The current workload justifies the employment of an additional two photographers, three assistants and full time in-house digital imaging artists. His wife Anie manages the marketing and promotion of the business and a full time studio manager runs general administration and customer service.

"Although I was born with film, I could see very early on the potential of switching to digital. Initially, when I used Photoshop, I did all the tricks, all the special effects. I just went crazy with it, then I had to be realistic and used it more intelligently and tastefully," says Yervant.

He also shoots digital much as he would with film, taking care with each shot and using as much natural and available light as possible. Whilst devoting great care with exposure he often shoots more images at a wedding without any fear of waste: "I capture the emotions, the magic that I look for in the day, because I am not worried about film usage.

"I used to say the video guys always captured great moments because they had so many frames and they caught the best expressions. Now I'm using digital I can afford to take a couple more extra shots, to capture better expressions."

Shooting 2000 images at a wedding he must work fast, while still "having fun and capturing loads of special expressions and moments." He also lets the couple have fun,

no posing or limits, allowing his couples to get in the mood naturally, capturing genuine and natural expressions.

Working so quickly he has a simple lighting plan, using "a little bit of off-camera flash for fill-in", if he feels the available light is a little too flat. Sometimes this is reinforced with a low-wattage, off-camera video light, set at an angle to get a "warm motion-picture-like soft look", but Yervant prefers to utilise available light for most of the shoot. His style consciously conforms with the manner in which the photographs are presented to the client, as a publication.

He has developed a system — unique to the studio — that creates a publication containing the client's images, put together in such a way that it resembles a one-off, special edition magazine.

For this he developed his own software — Page Gallery, written in Java script. As a Photoshop skin it runs on a Mac or a PC and organises Photoshop to construct page layouts. The software is presently on sale worldwide to other pros — and will soon be available in a Japanese edition followed by Spanish and other languages.

Yervant and the team use a Canon EOS 1Ds, equipped with five or six L-series lenses — a camera Yervant describes as "fantastic". Also on call are some Canon EOS 10D cameras. In the studio is a MacBook Pro, three G5 desktops with 23-inch cinema displays, a Mac Pro desktop with two 30-inch Cinema displays and two Intel iMacs with 24-inch screens. Software used includes Aperture 1.5, mainly for RAW file conversion.

What are the benefits of digital capture? Yervant answers that there are no chemical marks, no scratches — and the results are immediate: "You can look at the screen and see how the picture will look. Digital is also significantly cheaper. Although production time is longer, the results are superior to



Keep it simple. Working so quickly Yervant has a simple lighting plan, using off-camera flash for fill-in, if the available light is too flat.


film." The minuses are "probably the time taken to edit and download". For weddings he shoots JPEG, making sure the shot is perfect, the exposure correct.

The benefits for the clients are that they have so much more to choose from: hundreds of "fantastic images".

Other pluses are that images can be retouched more effectively with digital: blemishes erased, marks on the skin removed. He explains that you can do more with digital than ever could be accomplished with film.

"The scope is unlimited but one must be careful to apply some limitations and good taste. I have had clients who have made some pretty outlandish requests. I always tell them I am no plastic surgeon!"

With one eye on his home market and another on the US and UK, where his Page Gallery software is selling, he is rated "one of the top five wedding photographers in the world".

"It's all because of the style of photography I do, which really became possible with the use of digital. My capture has completely evolved into a new style ... I can be more creative and take more risks and not worry about any limitations." 

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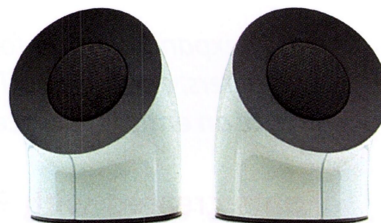
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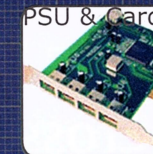
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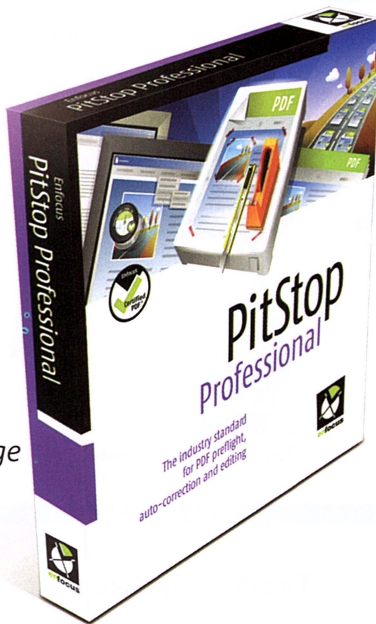
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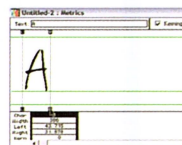
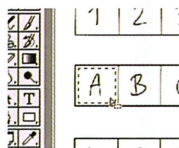
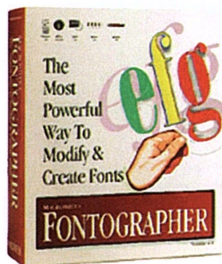
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What's the web up 2?

DO you Digg del.icio.us Flickr's on YouTube? Or are you LinkedIn to Friendsters via MySpace? All of these are examples of Web 2.0 — a term coined recently by Tim O'Reilly — representing a move from content on the web (the catchcry of the 1990s and early '00s) to metacontent, or content about content. Labels, descriptors, categories.

Metacontent is not new: our amazing desire to categorise things has led to dichotomous keys, dog food only in aisle 17 at the supermarket and the Dewey Decimal System — the bane of library visitors. (Young Melvil Dewey's system reflects the WASPish US community in which he resided. It's not surprising that religions and world views other than Protestant require workarounds to be accommodated by his catalogue.)

Similarly, our view of the education world is broken up into hierarchical categories in Science, Maths, English and so on — aberrant and not reflective of how people really work. Rather they are indicative of a mechanistic, Newtonian, industrialist time; out of step with our world where the boundaries between traditional disciplines are blurred to the extent that they are becoming invisible.

Web 2.0 effectively removes this rigid categorisation and moves us closer to a constructionist philosophy. Students take to this almost organically, as would we have, if the computing power had been there to support this form of information management when we were students. Their use of tags supersedes the top down, externally imposed classification systems of old.

According to del.icio.us: "Tags are one-word descriptors that you can assign to your bookmarks ... to help you organise and remember them. Tags are a little bit like keywords, but they're chosen by you, and they do not form a hierarchy. You can assign as many tags to a bookmark as you like and rename or delete the tags later. So, tagging can be a lot easier and more flexible than fitting your information into preconceived categories or folders."

The result can give rise to a mash-up, similar to Douglas Adams' cosmology of "the whole mish mash" — a post-post-modernism where new forms of knowledge are individually built as needed from an eclectic soup. This "power to the people" movement (I knew there was something about those guys in the '60s) creates some interesting teaching opportunities.

Google's new image labeler "game" asks two unrelated people to tag an image and points are gained when tags match. Of course Google is building a metacontent database of its own that will launch it still further in the knowledge stakes.



Hot Links

www.yourdon.com/downloads

Ed Yourdon's ultimate mashup of Web 2.0. Download the latest pdf

www.edugadget.com

google image labeler lessons

del.icio.us/help/tags

Description of how to tag information for quick access in the Del.icio.us world.

www.oreillynet.com/lpt/a/6228

Tim O'Reilly's take on Web 2.0, its explanation and implications

In edugadget, Steve Brooks suggests that this can be used as a teaching activity: "In Social Studies, have the students consider how a person's local environment might influence the tags or labels they would use ... In English, get the students to discuss the value of spelling, including variations in spelling for the same words around the world. You could also get them to discuss why they used nouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc. to label the images."

Powerful stuff. No more "why do I have to learn grammar?" It's needed to fulfil a relevant task, rather than answer an irrelevant exam question.

How does Apple stack up in this new era? Two issues arise: flexibility and security.

When mail is sent to your machine, or a web page is received, essentially someone else is writing data to your machine's memory.

In essence (programmers please forgive the simplification) these data can cause commands to be executed without your intervention.

By this time you would have heard of the bug whereby a carefully crafted page on MySpace, in conjunction with QuickTime, can cause a stack overflow, escalating permissions and possibly giving root access to a third party (see Buzz, 01.2007).

Got all that? Don't worry — let's just leave it as being a Bad Thing™. I don't wanna get all Maths on you, but permutations and combinations mean that the more players in a given system then the more potential problems exist. The Unix foundation of OS X means that there are already many entities (for example the user "nobody") that can act on the user's behalf, effectively protecting the system as these entities have limited power.

The Open Source nature of OS X's underpinnings, Darwin, places Apple well in the world of collaboration as it does with the rapidly evolving tools and service provision of Web 2.0. Ruby on Rails, an increasingly used language and framework for Web 2.0 constructs, will work out of the box when Leopard is installed.

Apple and its users are similarly used to the idea of a new OS every 18 months or so. As users, we've become used to changing offerings, not just improvements. We're becoming accustomed to the ephemeral, "always in beta" world of Web 2.0

And, I would hazard, Web 3.0 and 4.0 ☹

As an educator, Martin Levins likes empowering people to create using computing technologies.



Hot Links

www.smileonmymac.com
DiscLabel

Customise your DVDs

Outside the template

APPLÉ'S iDVD software (included with the iLife suite) makes it almost ridiculously easy to turn home movies and other videos into visually stunning DVDs. In fact, the program does almost all the work for you. There are also plenty of less-obvious ways to customise your DVDs, so you can create something a little more distinctive or add useful features.

Create video chapters. Unlike a videotape, a DVD is a random-access medium: your DVD player can access any part of the disc almost instantly, with no rewinding or fast-forwarding. To take advantage of this instant access, professional DVD creators break movies into chapters – markers that viewers can use to jump quickly to scenes, no matter when they happen in the video. And with the help of iMovie and iDVD, you can do the same thing for your DVDs.

Any movie with more than one scene is a candidate for chapters. In a vacation movie, you might create a separate chapter for each day or each major destination. In a wedding movie, create chapters for each of the big day's milestones: the bridal preparations, the ceremony, the reception, the cake cutting, and so on.

Making chapters. iDVD can create a menu of your movie's chapters, but you must tell it where each chapter begins. To do that, create chapter markers in iMovie HD before you import the movie into iDVD.

Open your video in iMovie HD and switch to the Timeline Viewer. Position the playhead at the point where you want the next chapter to begin and then select Markers: Add Chapter Marker. A yellow diamond will appear in the timeline.

You can also create chapters while watching the movie: simply press ⌘-shift-M whenever playback reaches a point where you'd like a marker.

Naming chapters. iMovie names each chapter marker after the clip it appears in. That means you'll end up with a lot of meaningless chapter names, such as

Clip 02. To give viewers a better sense of what they'll find at that marker, give it a more useful name, such as *Arrival in Paris* or *Cutting the Cake*. Later, when you create your disc, iDVD will use these

From markers to menu. Use iMovie HD's Chapters pane to name your movie's chapter markers. When you import the movie into iDVD, the names will appear in the chapter submenu.

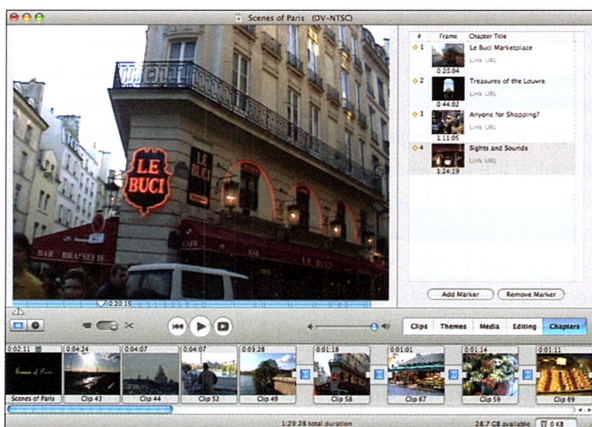
marker names to create menu buttons for each chapter.

To rename your chapter markers, switch to the Chapters pane in iMovie and then double-click on a chapter's name to select it (see the screenshot "From markers to menu"). Since the text will also be used as a menu button, limit the new name to just a few words.

Building your DVD menu. To add your chaptered movie to an iDVD project, simply drag the movie from iDVD's Media Browser into the menu area.

When you do this, iDVD creates two buttons for the movie: Play Movie and Scene Selection. The first lets someone viewing your DVD play the movie from the beginning. The Scene Selection button leads to a submenu page that contains a button for each chapter in your movie.

Each of iDVD 6's menu themes provides multiple submenu designs, including one for a chapter submenu. (To see a theme's submenu designs, make sure you have 6.0 selected from the Theme pane's pull-down menu, and then click on the grey arrow to the left of the theme's name.) If you use one of these themes for your disc, the program automatically applies that theme's design to your chapter submenu. This adds visual consistency to your DVD design.





Many chapter submenu designs include a video still for each chapter (taken from the frame where you placed the chapter marker). To choose a different still for the chapter, click on the image and move the playhead that appears to a new position. If you have more chapters than will fit on one submenu page, click on the right arrow to move to the next page.

Customise your menus. iDVD comes with a stock of slick and visually impressive menu designs, but there are some easy ways to add a little personal flair to your DVDs:

Change the background. You can use your own photo or movie as the background of a menu screen. To replace a background, simply drag a photo or movie from the Media Browser into the menu area. If the menu includes drop zones (the animated areas that display photos or movies), you can remove those as well, by holding down the ⌘ key while dragging your photo onto the background. In the pop-up menu that appears, choose Replace Background And Drop Zones.

Change the buttons. As any clothes lover will tell you, an easy way to perk up a shirt is to replace its buttons. To perform the same makeover magic on your DVD, open the Buttons pane. From here, you can select a new button shape, such as a stamp, a frame, or a filmstrip; change the button's size; or adjust the font and colour of the button's label.

You can also rearrange the buttons; simply select Free Positioning from the Arrangement section, and then drag the button wherever you wish. To avoid having part of a button get cut off when your menu is displayed on a TV screen,

Do it your way. You can customise almost every aspect of your DVD menus. This scene-selection menu, generated from chapter markers created in iMovie HD, sports a background photo from iPhoto and customised menu buttons.

choose View: Show TV Safe Area, and then make sure all your buttons fit within the dark rectangle that appears.

To apply the same settings

quickly to other buttons, select the customised button and choose Edit:

Copy Style. Then select a different button and choose Edit: Paste Style.

Add text. You can add text to a DVD menu by selecting Project: Add Text, and then typing the text in the box that appears. For example, you might create a tagline, such as "Sights and Sounds of Paris," to go with your vacation movie. For long passages of text, you'll need to press the return key at the end of each line — iDVD won't wrap text automatically. Later, if you find a typo, double-click on the text box and use your arrow keys to navigate the text passage.


To create an entire screen of text — for example, to offer some background on the places you visited — choose Project: Add Submenu. Double-click on the new submenu button to access the screen, and then add your text. Use the Menu pane to customise the text's formatting.

Reuse your work. If you've customised the DVD's main menu and want to apply its design to submenus in the same project, choose Advanced: Apply Theme To Submenus. Conversely, if you've customised a submenu and you want to apply its design to the main menu, choose Advanced: Apply Theme To Project.

You can also save your customised design to use in other iDVD projects. Choose File: Save Theme As Favorite, and then give your new theme a name. The next time you start a project, you'll find your design under Favorites in the Themes pane's pull-down menu.

Add bonus material. Your DVD can hold much more than just movies. If you visited an interesting tourist spot, for example, you could include PDFs of web pages describing your destination. If

you're making a training DVD, you might want to put in a copy of the employee handbook or other relevant items.

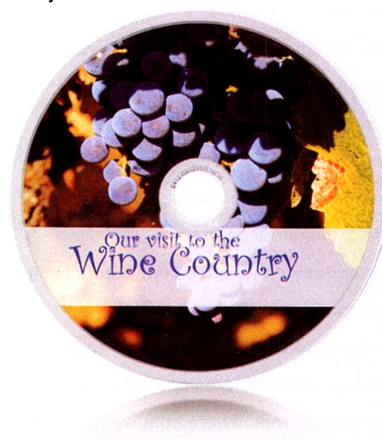
To include these types of files, select Advanced: Show DVD-ROM Contents and then drag files from your hard drive into the DVD-ROM Contents window. When viewers insert the DVD into a computer, they'll find the documents under the disc's DVD-ROM Contents menu. 

DVD Glamour

To give your slide-show DVD a really professional touch, print your own disc label.

Printable DVDs. Almost all of Epson's photo printers can print directly onto DVDs. To use the feature, you have to buy special discs with a printable surface; however, by printing directly onto the disc, you eliminate the risk of your label jamming a DVD player — a danger posed by paper labels. Epson includes software for designing the disc's label, or you can use third-party software such as SmileOnMyMac's DiscLabel (see "Hot links").

Press-on labels. Don't have an Epson printer? Check out HP's CD/DVD Tattoos. You print a reversed image of your DVD's design on the underside of one of these thin pieces of plastic, and then peel off the adhesive edges and press the plastic label on the top of your disc (shown here). The tattoos are transparent, so you'll need to use a disc with a white or silver surface. The resulting images are nicely saturated and have a glossy finish. — Kelly Turner



By Sean McNamara.

Help folder

We answer our readers' questions

Each month, STM (02 8338 0222) gives an Evolution backpack valued at \$150 to the *Australian Macworld* reader who sends in the most intriguing Help folder query.

Evolution is the next level in laptop protection, presented in a comfortable, easy to use backpack large enough to accommodate a 15-inch laptop.

This is the first laptop bag that completely hides your laptop. Open the bag and you can't see it in there. The concealed laptop compartment looks like an inside wall of the bag, and the suspended foam cell provides protection on all sides. Not only does Evolution protect your laptop from the elements, but also from thieves — because nobody will know you're carrying a laptop except you.

Like most STM bags, Evolution has waterproof zippers, but STM has added a built-in rain cover for your bag and reflective accents to provide even greater protection.

Send your query to matthew.powell@niche.com.au for consideration in Help folder. Include your full mailing address to be eligible to win the Evolution backpack. All queries and solutions are the sole property of Niche Media.

■ Sean McNamara is a Sydney-based consultant trading as MacAssist.



Hot Links

www.imug.com.au
The Internet Macintosh User Group
docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=106227
All about kernel panics
www.parallels.com
Make sure your machine is virtually up to date
forums.parallels.com
See if other Parallels users share your problems
www.fyre-fraust.ca/softworks/index.html
Eye of the Horus
www.sisuworlks.com/page3/page17/page17.html
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members.optusnet.com.au/frovil/spotlaser.html
Spotlaser
www.bigrobotsoftware.com/software.html
Meta
www.windstormsoftware.com/wssw/moru/index.html
MoRU

Sticky iDisk

1

■ I set up a trial .Mac account and enabled iDisk mirroring (which displays the contents of the iDisk on the desktop). Sadly I have allowed my .Mac trial period to expire without changing the preferences on the account. Now, all those prefs are disabled (greyed out) and the icon is left on my Desktop — do you have any suggestions on removing this pesky iDisk icon?

Stuart Murdoch
Sunshine, Vic.

This is one of the examples of why user interfaces can be such a hard thing to get right. Apple has, quite rightly, set up the preferences not to be available if your .Mac account isn't valid, but it hasn't considered your situation — where you haven't disabled iDisk mirroring and now can't get access to those settings.

It would appear these settings are stored in three files in the user's Preferences folder —

open your Home folder (choose Home from the Go menu in the Finder, or type `⌘-Shift-H` in the Finder). Open the Library folder in your Home folder, then open the Preferences folder in there. Look for these files:

```
com.apple.MirrorAgent.plist
com.apple.idisk.plist
com.apple.DotMacNotifica
tions.plist
```

Some or all of them may be in the By Host folder, in which case they'll have some gobbledegook in the name before the ".plist".

Drag these files to the Desktop, then restart your computer. You should see a disk image on your desktop called "Previous local iDisk for username.dmg" where username is your .Mac account name A. You can delete that if

you don't need anything from your iDisk, along with the preference files we dragged to the Desktop previously.



Failure to click

2

■ I have an iMac G5 using Mac OS X and I've encountered a problem with my desktop background. The desktop won't show any

icons or let me right-click on it. The icons show up in the Finder window of the Desktop folder but not on the actual desktop. Is there any way to fix my desktop?

David Brumby
Charters Towers, Qld

From your description, David, I can eliminate two causes of blank desktops I found when researching this question: the types of items the Finder preferences can preclude from

3

■ Having successfully installed Windows XP in Parallels on my Core Duo Mac mini a couple of months ago, I'm now having trouble installing the same configuration on a friend's new MacBook Pro running Mac OS X v10.4.8.

Parallels appears to be installed OK, and the Virtual machine is set up, but when I insert the Windows XP install CD and click the Parallels 'Power On' button (as per the manual) the screen shades to grey with a 'You need to restart your computer ...' etc. message in several languages in the centre of the screen A.

This looks very unsettling. Any advice as to what is happening and how to fix it?

Ian Godfrey
via iMug

What you're seeing, Ian, is a kernel panic (see "Hot links") — basically, your machine has crashed.

The first thing I would try is to use a copy of your Parallels virtual machine on your friend's machine to see if that starts up. From what you describe, I don't think that will work, but it's worth eliminating the configuration of the virtual machine on the MacBook Pro.

Next, make sure you're running the latest version of Parallels and Mac OS X. Check the Parallels web site to download the latest version — just download the trial version, which will be fully functional from the activation information you have already entered.

It might also be worthwhile trying to set up a virtual machine under a different login just in case there's something in your friend's home folder (most likely a dodgy preference file) mucking things up.

Parallels also has a Forums area (see "Hot links"). It would certainly be worthwhile searching the forum for solutions and posting a query there if no one has experienced your problem.



showing on the desktop are not the sort which would show in the Desktop folder in your Home folder (such as disks and CDs), and if somehow your Finder had been set to a Simple Finder, you wouldn't easily be able to navigate to the Desktop folder in your Home folder.

You're almost certainly in the realm of corrupt preference file/s, and the most likely candidates are the com.apple.finder.plist and

com.apple.desktop.plist files which you will find in the Preferences folder in the Library folder in your Home folder.

Drag those to the Trash, restart and see if that fixes the problem. If it doesn't, you may need to drag your whole Preferences folder out of the Library folder (not to the Trash) and restart — you could then start to bring back your preference files a few at a time to try and keep an eye out for the culprit.

Classic problem

4

■ I recently installed a larger capacity hard drive in my Tangerine 300MHz G3 iBook. Since then, it will not start up from the original System disk or any other disk with a System Folder on it, either in the internal CD-ROM drive or using an external hard drive.

I have tried booting from a Norton Utilities disk. That did not work either. A flashing question mark is all the computer can manage. I realise that it needs to be formatted/initialised, but how? Do I need separate (third party) disk formatting program?

Ralph Gillen
Berry, NSW

You're right, Ralph — the drive does probably need to be formatted, but it seems the

problems go beyond just that one step.

The original System CD includes tools that should do the job, if only you can get it to boot! It would be worthwhile trying to boot from another boot CD if you know anyone else with install CDs — it's best to avoid CDs for particular machines, as they will often not boot other machines.

To try and boot your machine, reset the PRAM by holding down ⌘-option-P-R on startup until you hear the chime a second time, then let those keys go — then immediately hold down the C key to try and boot from the CD.

You can also try holding down ⌘-shift-option-delete while starting up — this tries to boot from any valid boot disk on many Macs.

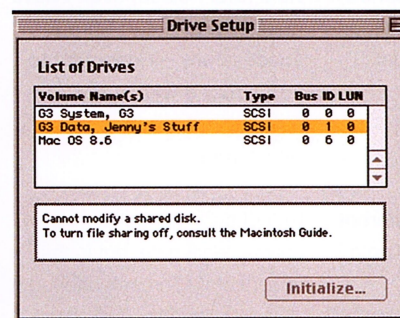
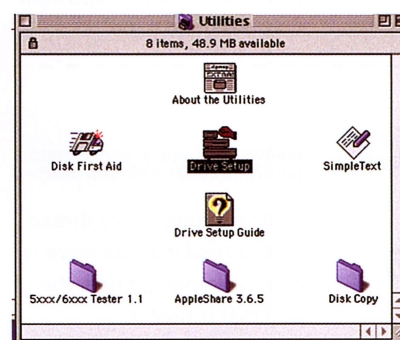
Another key combination to try when starting more recent Macs is Option by itself — this brings up the boot manager. Hopefully you will then see the CD as an option to click on and then click on the right-facing arrow.

If you can get your machine booted from a pre-Mac OS X CD, open the Utilities folder on the CD and open Drive Setup A

— click on the HD and then click the "Initialize..." button B.

Mac OS X install CDs include the Disk Utility, but you can just choose to initialise the disk while installing Mac OS X.

If your iBook also has FireWire, you can try putting your iBook into FireWire Target Disk Mode — hold down T as you start up your machine, then plug the machine into another Mac using a FireWire cable. You might then be able to format the drive and install a System onto it.



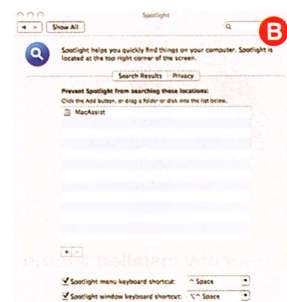
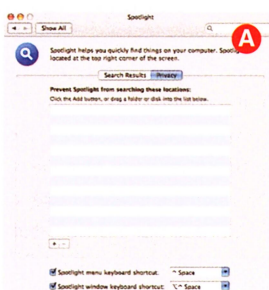
Beginners start here

Spotlight on Spotlight, part two

■ Last month we looked at the basics of Spotlight, Apple's search technology built into Mac OS X v10.4. Like all technology, sometimes Spotlight goes awry, so let's look at a couple of troubleshooting tricks to try and get it back up and running.

The most common problem is that Spotlight's index becomes corrupt or doesn't include all of the information Spotlight needs to perform its searches.

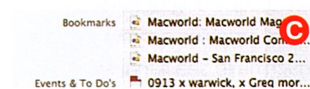
The first thing to try to get the index corrected is to



disable Spotlight on your HD, then re-enable it. Open System Preferences, click on Spotlight, then click on the Privacy tab A. Drag your HD into the window so that it appears in the list B. You can then delete it from the list and the HD will be indexed again (indicated by the pulsating dot in the middle of the magnifying glass Spotlight icon).

You might also need to use a third party utility to rebuild the Spotlight indices — Eye of the Horus and Rebuild Spotlight Index (see "Hot links") perform this basic (but sometimes essential) task. Rebuilding will fix almost all Spotlight problems.

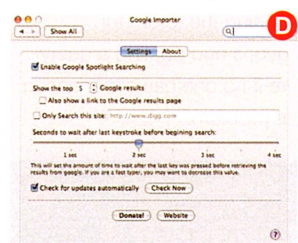
Making it better. Spotlight was designed to be



extensible — application writers can include information in their programs which allows Spotlight to search documents created by the program.

There are also Spotlight plug-ins — for example, Google Importer (see "Hot links") will display Google search results when you perform a Spotlight search C and D, and Ziplight (see "Hot links") will include the contents of .zip files in the Spotlight indices (and therefore searches).

Another Spotlight tool is BSP (see "Hot links"). This utility allows you to modify the categories used in Spotlight's search results, which in turn allows you to

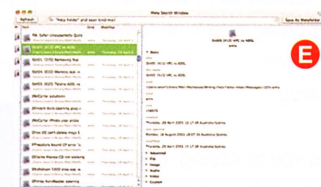


distinguish between file types which Spotlight lumps into its "Documents" category — the category assigned when the file doesn't match any of Spotlight's pre-defined categories.

The last category of Spotlight tools we'll look at are searching utilities which allow more finely-controlled (and perhaps more natural) searches to be made. Into this category fall Spotlaser, Meta and MoRU (see "Hot links" for all of these).

For example, Meta allows you to perform a search such as "Help Folder" and sean kind:mail E.

Making Spotlight work the way you want it too will increase its utility significantly — and that's saying something for a program I think is one of the most useful features of Mac OS X.



Help for another reader

Microsoft Reader tip

■ I've just read Peter Evans's letter ("Virtual reality," Mailbox 12.2006). I'm not sure that your reply regarding Microsoft supplying replacement CDs is necessarily the case.

However, I found a different solution on one of the Apple discussion boards at:

discussions.apple.com/thread.jspa?threadID=436156&tstart=0

Have a look at this thread — and read it all, as there is some information near the end that is useful.

As a total novice, even I have managed to get to Step 8 successfully — just need to find a friend with Nero!

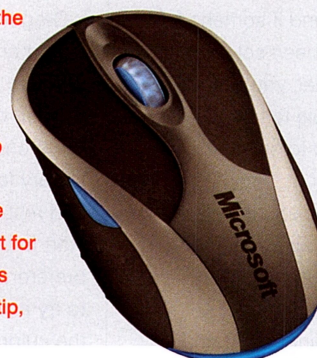
Ang Sty
via internet

I'm not sure that solution is entirely legitimate, but in the absence of Microsoft offering a

fair way for VPC users to continue using their copy of Windows, it might have to do.

Each month, Microsoft gives a free Notebook Optical Mouse valued at \$70 to the Australian Macworld reader who submits the best tip. Sized for mobility and designed to be noticed, Microsoft Notebook Optical Mouse 3000 offers great comfort for either hand and is always good to go. E-mail your tip,

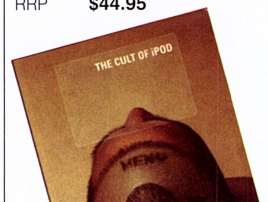
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Author **Leander Kahney**
 Publisher **No Starch Press**
 ISBN **1593270666**
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The Cult Of iPod, the follow-up to the best-selling *The Cult Of Mac*, sees author Leander Kahney of *Wired News* fame look at how Apple's stunningly modish portable player is changing the way we store, carry, and use all kinds of information.

Chapter one describes the iPod's relatively low-impact introduction. Steve Jobs hailed it as a "break-

through device", but who was listening? Chapter two introduces the iPod's acknowledged creator Tony Fadell who, having failed to interest Sony, sold Apple the concept of a digital player linked to an online music store. Chapter three looks at iPod-induced changes to our listening habits, the upsides of shuffling and how letting others examine your music collection can apparently either ruin your social life or encourage someone nice to knock on your door at midnight. Chapter four follows how the word about iPod got around and why people would create their own iPod ads. Chapter five takes a peek at DJ wannabes who morph into MP3Js, at folk who dress up as iPods for Halloween and also at nasty types who use iPods to steal software from computer stores. Chapter six looks at iPod tributes from fans, and at iPods in famous places around the world. Chapter seven is about iPod entrepreneurs and the booming business of accessorising the iPod. Chapter eight examines the wide-ranging cultural impact of the iPod on contemporary society and the unquenchable enthusiasm of employees at Microsoft for the iPod. Which finally drove Bill Gates to Zunacy.

A nice blend of social commentary and uninhibited fun with quirky colour pix scattered liberally throughout.

Author **David Pogue & Adam Goldstein**
 Publisher **O'Reilly**
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 RRP **\$44.95**



Switching To The Mac, Tiger Edition The Missing Manual continues the *Missing Manual* tradition by providing all the answers.

Part one, "Welcome To Macintosh," is a crash course in everything you see on the Macintosh screen: Dock, Sidebar, icons, windows. Part two, "Moving In", is dedicated to the

actual process of moving your software, settings, and even peripherals across the chasm from the PC to the Mac. It covers the relatively easy parts (documents, pictures, music files) and the harder ones (e-mail, address books, buddy lists, and so on). Importantly, this section identifies the Macintosh equivalents for Windows-only programs and explains how to move your data to them. Priceless.



Hot Links

cultofmac.com/book.php
 Web site for cultists

Part three, "Making Connections," lets you know where to find your internet settings on your old Windows machine — and where to plug them in on the Macintosh.

Part four, "Putting Down Roots," builds on your basic skills. Learn how to set up private accounts for people who share a single Mac, navigate the System Preferences program (the Mac equivalent of the Windows Control Panel), and operate the fifty great freebie programs that come with Mac OS X, from casual Chess to the awesome iLife suite.

There are two great appendixes. The first, "Where'd It Go?" is an invaluable alphabetical listing of every Windows function and where to find its equivalent in Mac OS X. The second, for Intel Macs only, shows you how to run Windows on your Mac via the free Boot Camp or using Parallels Desktop.

Author **Keith Gemmell**
 Publisher **PC Publishing**
 ISBN **1870775953**
 RRP **\$29.99**




Making Music on the Apple Mac

is a simply laid out and nicely-illustrated 100-page introductory title to making your Mac sing. Although published prior to Intel and GarageBand 3 there's still a lot of value for the many musical folk with older systems.

Chapter one helps you select the right machine for your particular musical purposes. Chapter two involves setting up your studio and covers USB and FireWire interfaces, keyboard controllers, preamps, mics, speakers and headphones. Chapter three, "Making Music with GarageBand," shows you the details of building arrangements, recording guitars and vocals, using Apple Loops and GarageBand software instruments, adding FX and mixing down.

Unfortunately this is only GarageBand 1, showing the book's 2005 publication date.

Chapter four looks at the new features, as they were then, in GarageBand 2, while chapter five takes you beyond GarageBand 2 to the fully professional tools — Logic, Cubase and Digital Performer. Chapter six looks at score writing and self-publishing with Sibelius and Finale. Chapter seven shows you how to tag your files, making them internet-ready, encode them as MP3, burn them to CD and make them available to your eager audience on the web.

If you write or sing songs, play in a band, produce dance tracks, or teach music, this book will point you in the right direction. 

Keith has been a Mac addict since 1984 and still can't fathom why there is anyone who isn't.



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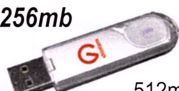
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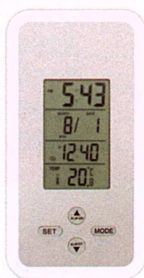
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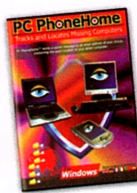
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Ratings key

Outstanding	★★★★★
Very good	★★★★
Good	★★★
Flawed	★★
Unacceptable	★
Dangerous	☠

AMW lab: Multi-function photo printers

Picture perfect

LAST month we looked at the cheapest way to get your hands on a multi-function printer, and the good news for anyone who went hunting one in the stores is that prices keep plummeting. This month we're looking at MFPs again, but this time we're focussed on the very best print quality available.

AMW lab tested four multi-function photo quality printers; Brother's MFC-665CW, Canon's PIXMA MP960, Epson's Stylus Photo RX590 and HP's Photosmart C7180 (See AMW's separate review of the Lexmark X9350 on page 75). We were very impressed with the photo quality output from all these multiple personality printers, with the Epson having a very slight edge over the others – but not enough to make it the sole deciding factor for prospective buyers. When printing a colour web page on plain paper, the HP produced the best result, with the Canon and Epson quite satisfactory, and the Brother a tad anaemic.

Since the difference in print quality wasn't great enough to provide a standout performer, choosing one for your home will come down to which features you absolutely need, which you can make do without, and of course, how much money you've got in the budget. All four of the reviewed printers provide printing, scanning and copying, with the HP and Brother adding fax to the mix, while the Canon and Epson forgo the fax, but provide film and transparency scanning, as well as CD/DVD printing.

Brother MFC-665CW. If you need to do almost everything with one machine, at a great price, the Brother MFC-665CW deserves your close attention. Along with the standard features of photo quality output, scanning and copying, this Brother MFP includes an answering machine, phone handset and speakerphone with its fax function. Oh, and did we mention it includes WiFi? At the meagre \$349 asking price, this is a lot of machine for your money.

The MFC-665CW uses four separate ink cartridges, and has an extra tray for postcard-sized photo paper. Unfortunately, this extra tray isn't totally automatic, as you have to pull out the whole tray assembly and flick a plastic lever to bring the postcard paper into play. It does save you having to remove the plain paper and load photo postcard blanks, but you'll still have to get out of your chair and fiddle with the printer.

Brother has designed this MFP for the small office or home office and it handles most essential office functions in one compact box, including an automatic document feeder for copying multiple pages. About the only negative is the print speed which, while adequate on standard setting, is quite slow in comparison to the others on the highest quality setting.



We evaluate, rigorously test and give detailed assessments of new-release software and hardware.

	Stylus Photo RX590	PIXMA MP960	Photosmart C7180	MFC-665CW
■ Type	Photo-quality multi-function inkjet			
■ Rating	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★ 1/2	★★★★
■ Pros	CD/DVD printing, film/transparency scanning	CD/DVD printing, film/transparency scanning, huge LCD	Very fast, very quiet, WiFi, dual paper trays, huge LCD	WiFi, fax from Mac, answering machine, document feeder
■ Cons	Single paper tray, no fax	Single paper tray, no fax	None	A bit slow on highest quality setting
■ Ports	USB, camera cards, PictBridge	USB, camera cards, Bluetooth option, PictBridge	USB, WiFi, Bluetooth, Ethernet, camera cards, fax, PictBridge	USB, WiFi, camera cards, fax, PictBridge
■ SRP	\$399	\$599	\$599	\$349
■ Manufacturer	Epson	Canon	Hewlett-Packard	Brother
■ Distributor	Epson Australia 02 8899 3666	Canon Australia 02 9805 2000	HP Australia 1300 304 889	Brother International (Aust) 02 8875 6210
■ Reviewer	Ian Yates			
■ Hot links	www.epson.com.au	www.canon.com.au	www.hp.com.au	www.brother.com.au



Canon PIXMA MP960. Next candidate, in alphabetical order, is Canon's seriously chunky PIXMA MP960. This is a solid beast of a printer, with a huge 9cm LCD on a flip-up control panel. The Canon uses seven separate ink tanks to produce photo quality prints quickly. Unfortunately it only has one paper tray, so you have to swap plain for photo and back as your needs dictate. On the plus side, it can print directly onto suitable blank CDs and DVDs.

Canon doesn't include a fax function, but not everyone needs fax in these days of e-mailed everything, so this omission won't be a black mark for many buyers. What Canon has included is the capacity to scan film negatives and transparencies, which will appeal to those with an extensive back catalogue acquired before the photography world went digital – and of course to those still feeding silver halide emulsions into their cameras.

The only way to connect the MP960 to your Macintosh is via USB, although Bluetooth is available as an optional extra. There are the usual slots for camera cards of most flavours, allowing you to print without even turning on your Mac.

Epson Stylus Photo RX590. Epson subscribes to the fax-is-history school of thought along with Canon, so if you disagree, you need to look at either the Brother or HP offerings. However, as we have come to expect from Epson, the company knows how to produce high quality photo output and the RX590 is no excep-

tion. In this exalted company Epson's edge is minor but tangible, so if your primary goal is the best photos you can get, with some other functions thrown in, this MFP won't disappoint.

The other functions in the mix are nearly identical to those offered by the Canon, with printing, scanning and copying supplemented by film/transparency holders and the ability to print onto suitable CD/DVD blanks. The photo quality prints are produced quite quickly supplied by the Epson's six separate ink tanks. As with the Canon, the only connectivity available is USB, but there are included slots for most types of camera card.

There's only one paper tray – a recurring theme with this crop of MFPs – but the price tag is several hundred dollars below the Canon and only a \$50 premium on the Brother.

HP Photosmart C7180. HP's top of the range MFP has nearly as many features as the Brother, lacking only the answering machine, and also lacks the CD/DVD printing offered by the Canon and the Epson. However, it spits out high quality photo prints faster than all three competitors, and does it so quietly that AMW lab had to place an ear to the cover to be sure it was actually doing anything.

Connectivity is a strong suit of the C7180, with USB, Ethernet, WiFi and Bluetooth included out of the box. The HP uses six ink tanks, and includes an extra paper tray for postcard photo paper



which, unlike the Brother, is automatically available without further intervention. Like the Canon, the HP has a huge 9cm LCD screen on a tilt-up panel.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. HP is asking the same premium \$599 price as Canon, with the Epson at \$399 and the Brother \$349, so a simple matter of finance may be the deciding factor for some buyers. However, if you can afford HP's

asking price, you get a well-connected, high-quality, high-speed, whisper-quiet MFP, which already has *AMW* lab feverishly looking for excuses to delay the inevitable return of the unit to the vendor.

If every last nuance of quality is essential, or if you absolutely must print on CD/DVD blanks, and have no need ever to fax again, the Epson Stylus Photo RX590 is our next choice. If you do need to fax and can't find the funds for the HP, the Brother MFC-665CW is well worth a look. ☞

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	Backup 3.1	Retrospect Desktop 6.1	Personal Backup X4 10.4.5
■ Type	Data backup application		
■ Rating	★★★★	★★★★	★★★
■ Pros	Easy to use	Retrospect Desktop's customization options are great for system administrators, but it has a.	Direct recording to optical discs
■ Cons	Notification features are intrusive; lacks an automated option for deleting old backups	confusing interface and is resource-intensive	Limited synchronisation features; poor restoration capabilities
■ OS X	10.3 or later	10.2 or later	10.2 or later
■ Processor	Universal	PowerPC	Universal
■ RRP	Included with .Mac membership	\$199	\$100
■ Publisher	Apple Computer	EMC Insignia	Intego
■ Distributor	Apple Australia 133 622	Channelworx 1300 883 882	Pica Australia 03 9388 9588
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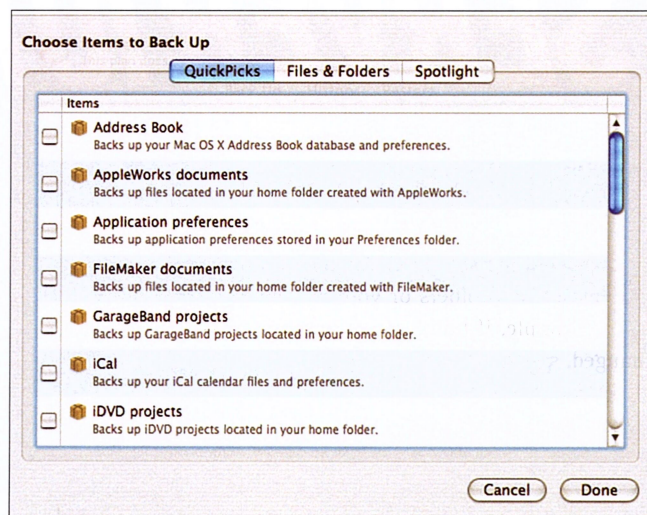
Backup software

Which one is right for you?

IN the near future, Mac users will begin updating their computers to run Mac OS X 10.5 (Leopard). One of the most interesting features promised for Leopard is Time Machine, a built-in backup utility with a slick 3D interface. Time Machine is Apple's response to a long-standing problem: too few Mac users create backups of any sort, and fewer still have thorough, automated backups.

Although the details may change before Leopard's final release, the version of Time Machine that Apple has publicly demonstrated and described on its web site appears to solve many backup problems. You can configure it with just a few clicks; it backs up all your files by default but can exclude particular files and folders; it runs once a day, at a time that you can specify; and it can use a secondary hard drive or network volume as its destination. When you change or delete a file, Time Machine retains older versions, so you can restore any file to a previous state. And, perhaps best of all, it works not just with whole files but also with

Pull a fast one. Backup's QuickPicks dialog box lets you select commonly used file and data types with a single click.



database records in supported applications; for example, you can retrieve a single mistakenly deleted Address Book entry.

All of these features are useful and enticing, and I'm optimistic that Time Machine will massively increase the number of OS X users who perform good backups. Does Time Machine spell the end of third-party backup utilities? Is it a complete and final answer to everyone's backup needs? And does it mean that you can put off implementing a backup strategy until Leopard ships? The answer to all of these questions is a resounding "No."

For all of Time Machine's promised virtues, it won't address every backup need, and there will still be a place for existing backup software.

For example, although Time Machine copies every file on your disk, it apparently does not make a bootable duplicate. Also, it's clearly geared toward individual users. Network administrators who want a centrally controlled repository for multiple users will have to look elsewhere.

Until you can take advantage of Time Machine, there's plenty of time left for your hard disk to crash, for someone to steal your laptop, or for any number of other catastrophes to befall you. If you haven't established a good backup plan, there's no time like the present. If you're on the fence as to the type of media you should use for backups, consider this: an external hard drive is good for backups right now, and it will be the ideal choice for Time Machine. Buying one is an investment that will serve you well into the future.

Which of the dozens of Mac backup programs should you choose? There's no single right answer for everyone. As a starting point, consider these five popular backup applications, all of which offer some features that Time Machine won't.

Backup 3.1. If you're a .Mac member, you have access to Apple's Backup 3.1. Among numerous changes since version 2, Backup now backs up new or changed files on each run without erasing older copies.

To use Backup, you begin by creating a plan – a combination of items to back up, one or more destinations, and a schedule for each destination. You can create as many plans as you want. To make the process as easy as possible, Backup provides several predefined templates you can use or modify to suit your needs. Or you can create a custom plan.

Data Backup 2.1	Tri-Backup 4.0.4
👤 1/2	👤 1/2
Numerous backup and scheduling options	Tri-Backup's backup and scheduling options stand out, but it's hampered by.
Lacks support for optical discs; limited synchronisation features	interface oddities and limited support for optical discs
10.2 or later	10.2 or later
Universal	PowerPC
\$109	\$US49
Prosoft Engineering	Tri-Edre
MacSense 02 9798 3288	Available online
www.macsense.com.au	www.tri-edre.com

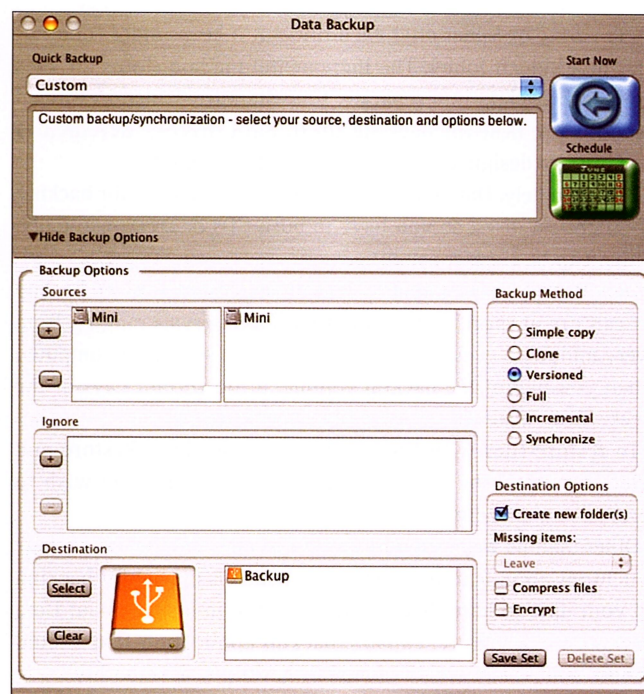
Both predefined and custom plans make use of selection criteria called QuickPicks. These options are designed to help you include information that you'd want to back up, such as Address Book data, preferences, your iPhoto library, Safari settings, and so on; you can even add third-party QuickPicks, such as the free Quick Pick Pack from Wishingline Design Studios. You can also choose specific files or folders to include in, or exclude from, a plan – either manually or via a built-in Spotlight search feature. However, this Spotlight search isn't dynamic. If you use it to find all folders whose names contain the word finances, the plan won't automatically pick up a new folder with that same name later on.

Backup can use any mounted volume as a destination, including your iDisk, local network servers, optical discs, and external hard drives. Unfortunately plans can run no more frequently than once a day; if you want to back up certain files more often, you'll have to create multiple plans. When a scheduled backup is about to run, Backup launches and an alert appears, with options to run the backup immediately or skip it; if you do nothing, it runs in 120 seconds. Backup offers no way to turn off this alert, which is unnecessarily intrusive for backups that do not require you to take any action (such as inserting a disc on which to burn data).

To restore files, you select a plan and click on the Restore button. Backup lists all the dates and times when that backup has run. Select an instance, and Backup displays a snapshot of all the files in the plan as they appeared at that time. Unfortunately, Backup offers no way to search your backups for files matching certain criteria, and finding all the versions of any particular file is awkward at best.

When your backup media becomes full, you can force a new full backup to run from scratch and then manually delete earlier incremental backups that copied only new or modified files. However, this process is confusing and error-prone; Backup should provide an automated option for deleting older backups when you run out of space.

For archiving commonly used files, Apple's Backup is more than adequate. Most users can set up an automated schedule in minutes with just a few clicks, and restoring backed-up files is straightforward. However, Backup may disappoint someone looking for advanced features such as rotating backups (which automatically delete older files), sophisticated selection criteria, or flexible scheduling.



Tailor-made. Creating a custom backup set in Data Backup is a straightforward matter of choosing a source, destination, and other options within a single window (schedules appear in an additional dialog box).

Data Backup 2.1. Prosoft Engineering's Data Backup 2.1 offers options for both beginners and power users. The first time you launch the program, it looks for an external hard drive and, if it finds one, offers to use that as the default destination; otherwise, it asks you to choose one. You can then drag files, folders, or an entire volume into the Sources field and click on Start Now for an immediate, hassle-free backup, saving your settings for future reuse if you like. Alternatively, you can choose from several pre-packaged file selections, ranging from your Documents folder to the entire startup drive.

You can also use any of Data Backup's six backup methods, which cover a wide range of scenarios, to create custom backup sets. With this flexibility and power comes greater complexity. I frequently had to consult the manual to determine which method was appropriate in a given situation. However, once you've chosen a method, you can customise it extensively.

The Clone method, as the name implies, creates a bootable duplicate of an entire disk on another disk (optionally ignoring specified files). The Simple Copy and Full Copy methods copy entire folders or volumes. With Simple Copy, subsequent backup runs are incremental – only copying new or modified files – but older files in the backup get overwritten. Full Copy makes a complete copy of your files in its own time-stamped folder each time you run the software. The Synchronize method merges the contents of two folders or volumes, but does so unintelligently – for example, if both a file's source and its destination have changed, synchronisation will fail, generating a message for you to check the logs but not offering any reconciliation option.

The other two backup methods incrementally copy new or changed files, but also retain previous versions of files (as well as files you've deleted from the source disk). The Versioned method makes the target drive or folder appear to be identical to the

source drive or folder after each run, but it keeps older copies of files in a hidden folder. The Incremental method stores the files from each backup in a separate, time-stamped folder. Versioned backups are best for backing up to hard drives; Incremental backups are designed with CDs and DVDs in mind.

Unfortunately, Data Backup offers no direct support for backing up to optical discs, so you have to burn CDs or DVDs manually, which can be time-consuming.

Data Backup's scheduling options are extensive. A given backup set can run at specific dates and times: at intervals ranging from every minute to every four weeks, when you start your computer, when you mount the backup volume, or on certain days of the week. It can also run on more than one schedule.

To restore files with Data Backup, choose File: Restore and select a source, the files or folders within it that you wish to restore, and a destination.

Other than its weak support for optical discs and below-average synchronisation feature – neither of which is crucial for backing up your data to hard drives – there's little to dislike about Data Backup. It's a mature, capable backup application that should handle almost any single-computer backup task smoothly.

Personal Backup X4 10.4. Intego's Personal Backup X4 10.4.5 has an unmistakably friendly interface that makes backing up look simple. Pick a backup type, choose your source and a destination, click on a button, and you're off. Behind this easy-to-use system is a full-featured backup application with some surprisingly advanced options – and some surprising limitations.

The fundamental unit of work in Personal Backup X4 is a script, which includes a backup's type, source, destination, schedule, and other options. Personal Backup X4 comes with several predefined scripts for immediate backup actions (just supply the source and destination), as well as scripts with predefined sources (your Documents, Music, and Pictures folders, for example). To customise a script, you can copy and edit an existing script or use a built-in assistant to create your own from scratch.

The script types define overall behaviour. The options are Backup (includes incremental updates after the first full run), Archive (stores files in a compressed disk image), Move (stores files in their original format and deletes the originals), Clone (creates bootable duplicates), and Synchronization (merges two

volumes or folders so that each has the most recent version of every file). The Synchronization type is rudimentary; it neither warns you nor offers any reconciliation options when a file's source and destination have both been modified.

Personal Backup X4 can also use the results of a Spotlight search as a source: enter search data, and the program backs up all files matching your search criteria on each run (unlike Apple's Backup, in which Spotlight searches are not dynamic). Unfortunately, this feature is buggy and unreliable; for example, searching for text in file content worked, but searching for text in file path names did not.

When choosing a source or destination for your backups, you can select not just a mounted volume but even an unmounted network volume. Personal Backup X4 can store your user name and password, if you wish, and can automatically connect to AFP, FTP, SMB, and WebDAV servers when it's time for a backup to run. In addition, it offers direct support for backing up to optical discs. Backups to CD or DVD can span multiple discs, and the program prompts you to insert additional discs when needed.

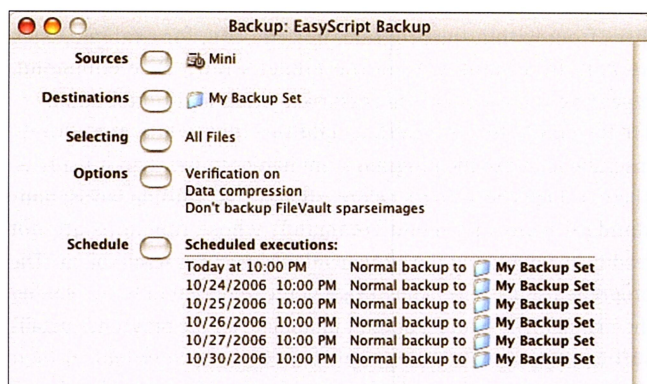
When it comes to restoring files, Personal Backup X4 is weak. Restoration is merely a matter of selecting a source and a destination and then clicking on a button, but the problem is that it's all or nothing: you can't choose which files to restore. Since you're much more likely to want to restore a portion of a backup than the whole thing, this is a significant flaw.

Personal Backup X4 10.4 certainly has flashes of brilliance, such as extensive network server support and direct recording to optical discs, and for basic backup operations, it works well. Unfortunately, bugs and a poor restoration feature mar an otherwise attractive program.

Retrospect Desktop 6.1. Retrospect Desktop 6.1, from EMC Insignia, is one of four editions of this software available for Macs. The Workgroup and Server editions add features for handling large networks and computers running OS X Server; the Express edition, bundled free with many hard drives and optical drives, omits network backups and tape drive support. Retrospect's design caters to the needs of network administrators, who must grapple with backing up numerous computers (both Macs and PCs). For the average home or small business user, though, the program can be intimidating.



Point of view. Personal Backup X4's default view shows you scripts (predefined and user-created) at the top, and the source and the destination below. Double-click on the script to expand the window and show detailed options.



Picking and choosing. A script window in Retrospect summarises all the options for a given backup. Changing any of the settings (by clicking on the corresponding button) opens additional windows.

In an attempt to bypass the complexity, Retrospect has a feature called the Easy-Script Wizard that builds a basic backup system by walking you through a series of questions. You can customise the plan it creates relatively easily. If you want to colour outside the lines even more, you must dig into the 256-page manual. The learning curve is challenging.

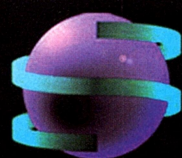
Retrospect Desktop can perform immediate, unscheduled backup, duplication, and restore actions. For automated use, you must create a script. This is simply a collection of settings – backup type, source, destination, schedule, and other options – all shown in a single window. Script types include Backup

(which creates archives in a proprietary file format, incrementally adding new files on each run without deleting old ones), Duplicate (for making exact, bootable duplicates), Archive (for copying files and optionally deleting the originals), and Restore (for the task of automated restorations). The program's options for selecting or excluding files, scheduling backups, and fiddling with every detail of a backup's execution are versatile – but confusing.

Although Retrospect Desktop works perfectly well for backing up a single machine, it can also back up two additional computers (Mac or PC) on your network via an included Retrospect Client program (you can purchase additional licenses if you're backing up more than three). Using an external hard drive, Retrospect Desktop can even create a bootable duplicate of your hard disk over a network connection, a rare feat among backup programs. You manage all backups and restorations centrally on the computer that's running Retrospect Desktop.

Retrospect Desktop has unparalleled capabilities when it comes to working with optical discs. Not only can it record to CDs and DVDs directly, it can record incrementally – adding to a disc on successive backups until it fills. No other Mac backup application can do this. On the other hand, Retrospect Desktop has historically been slow to add support for new hard drives as they appear on the market.

Thanks largely to its use of snapshots – lists of all the files in the source as they appeared at each backup, whether copied on



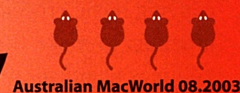
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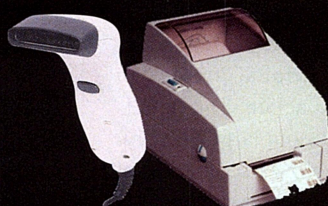


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that run or not — Retrospect Desktop has an extremely powerful Restore feature. You can restore an entire disk (or selected files) from any date to the original location or to an alternate location; you can also search a single backup set or across multiple sets for a file. Unfortunately, the interface is somewhat confusing. You must choose a destination before even searching for files to restore, and the program does a poor job of guiding you through some of the steps.

Although Retrospect Desktop was reasonably stable in my tests, I did find that it sometimes taxed the computer's processor, even making it difficult at times to use the computer for other tasks. For this reason, you'll want to schedule backups to run overnight or at other times when you're not using your computers.

Measured purely in terms of the number and depth of features, no other Mac backup program can hold a candle to Retrospect.

If you want to back up a small network, it's the best choice by far. As nice as the bells and whistles are, though, the application is wanting when it comes to ease of use and performance — at least for individual users.

Tri-Backup 4.0. Tri-Backup 4.0.4, from Tri-Edre, offers a respectable range of backup options in a somewhat quirky package. Like most other backup tools, it distinguishes between immediate actions and programmed (scheduled) actions; it also offers pre-packaged settings for several common actions.

Although all backup programs differ somewhat in their use of terminology, Tri-Backup differs more. If you want to make a bootable duplicate, the mode you choose is Direct Copy — not to be confused with Mirror Backup, which copies all files into a new folder on the destination volume. For incremental archives that preserve old copies of files, choose the Evolutive Mirror Backup. Although Tri-Backup always copies files incrementally when possible, its Incremental Backup mode stores new or changed files from each session in a separate, time-stamped folder. Its Archiving mode deletes originals from the source after copying them. Tri-Backup also offers a Synchronize mode, which attempts to make the contents of two folders or volumes identical.

Once you've decided on a mode, you choose a source and destination for your backup. You also select its options, schedule, filters for including or excluding files, and additional actions to perform before or after the backup. The details you can specify are numerous and jargon-heavy: you may find yourself scrambling for the manual to figure out, for example, whether you should exclude .DS_Store files, aliases, invisible files, and evolutive data. Speaking of the manual, it's a separate, optional download. Including it by default would have been a better choice.


Like most backup applications, Tri-Backup has limited support for optical discs. You can't burn

discs from within the program, but you can, for example, back up data to a blank CD via the Finder's Burn Disc command, repeating the process if necessary to store additional data.

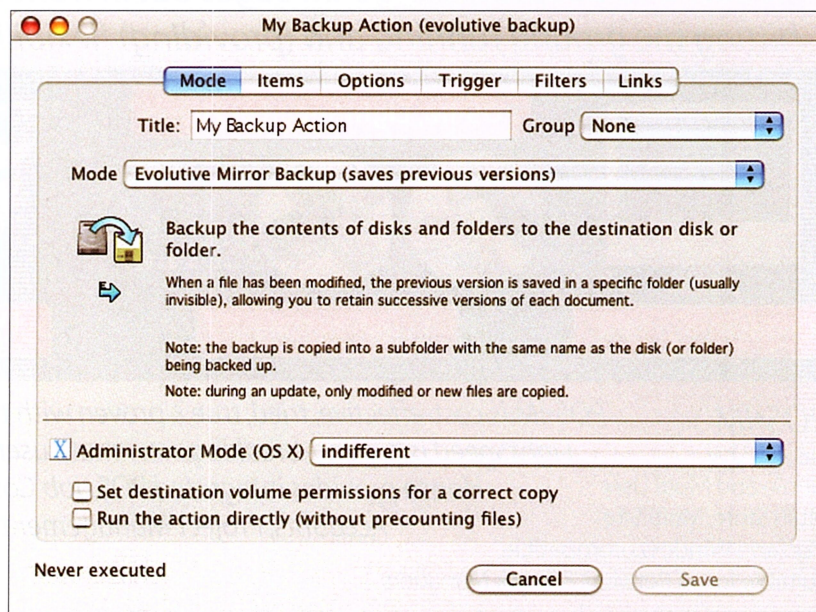
Tri-Backup is full of interface oddities that, while not entirely inscrutable, make the program seem harder to use than it really is. These include check boxes galore, often with confusing labels; non-standard icons and menu commands whose functions are not readily apparent; and the aforementioned peculiar terminology. The program also assumes knowledge you can obtain only by reading the manual. The manual doesn't illuminate all the program's details sufficiently to make less-sophisticated users confident in their choices, but a simpler and more intuitive interface would be better than an improved manual. That said, in most cases, if you simply accept the default selections, Tri-Backup does the right thing.

I found Tri-Backup made many activities that should have been simple unduly confusing. Unfortunate choices of interface and wording make this otherwise versatile program less attractive than others.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. Ultimately, your choice of backup software depends largely on the types of backups you wish to perform and what you intend to back up to. Apple's easy-to-use Backup 3.1 is a fine choice if you want only archives, but for bootable duplicates you'll need a separate application. If you'll be backing up to hard drives and want only bootable duplicates, the programs discussed here are overkill; you'd be much better served by SuperDuper 2.1 (www.shirt-pocket.com/SuperDuper). For an all-purpose, straightforward backup tool that handles everything from bootable duplicates to archives, Data Backup 2.1 is the clear winner.

If you plan to back up to optical discs, Retrospect Desktop 6.1 and Personal Backup X4 10.4.5 are the best options; Retrospect is more capable by far (but also more expensive and more difficult to use). However, Retrospect is unrivalled for backing up multiple computers over a network and for maintaining total control over every aspect of a backup when necessary. 

Source of confusion? To configure a new programmed action in Tri-Backup, you'll have to work your way through several screens, many of which contain confusing options.



■ Type	High-end all-in-one printer
■ Rating	★★★★½
■ Pros	Wireless; easy to set up; very good quality prints
■ Cons	Scanning over the network a bit clumsy
■ OS X	10.2 or later (10.3 or later for wireless)
■ RRP	\$499
■ Manufacturer	Lexmark
■ Distributor	Lexmark 1800 362 192
■ Reviewer	Matthew JC. Powell
■ Hot links	www.lexmark.com.au

Lexmark X9350

High-end all-in one comes to the Mac

WHEN Lexmark launched its range of all-in-one printers last year, I was disappointed to note that only the mid-range X4350 worked with the Mac. Lexmark reps at the time could offer no reason for it other than that “this is the one we’re marketing to Mac users”. The considerably more capable X8350 remained the exclusive preserve of Windows users.

And it still does. However, the new top-of-the-range, the X9350 announced right at the death of 2006, adds full Mac support for printing (including photo printing, faxing, scanning and copying). It’s essentially identical to the X8350, but wireless – it includes an 802.11g print server, compatible with 802.11b networks.

I set it up to do its stuff wirelessly, because I wanted to know just how functional this machine could be on the network. Therefore some of my conclusions may not match your own, if you use it connected directly to the computer with USB. Also worth noting is that the X9350 was not available in time to be included in the AMW lab test this issue, which is why it’s being tested in isolation. None of the conclusions in this review should be seen as comparison against the units that did make it in time for the lab test.

Wireless setup of the X9350 is very easy and straightforward, although I should note the instructions given in the manual are more convoluted than they need to be. If you’ve set up a wireless network and a Rendezvous/Bonjour printer before, you’ll pretty much be able to skip the manual.

In action. I was surprised at the speed of the X9350. For monochrome prints it comes as close to a laser printer as I’ve seen in an inkjet (though if you’re pedantic the text still isn’t quite as crisp). Promised speed in monochrome is 32ppm, but obviously much depends on the complexity of pages. Colour prints are obviously a little slower, but still more than adequate. The only time I felt the speed could pick up a little was in photo printing, where it lagged a little behind my Canon iP5000 (though it’s worth noting that the Canon was printing from a direct USB connection and the Lexmark over a network – this may be a factor, though it shouldn’t).

The quality of photo prints was about on par with the Canon, which is to say pretty good, but still not quite as good as you get from recent Epson printers – especially for black

and white photographs, where Epson particularly excels. The print engine, so far as I can tell, is identical to that used in Lexmark’s P350 postcard printer – certainly the consumables are the same for both – so if you’ve seen the output of that machine you’ll know what this one can do

According to the manual, I should also be able to scan from the computer over the network, but I wasn’t actually able to make this work. I imagine it’s a matter of some configuration I’ve not got quite right (perhaps the manual is useful after all). This mattered little, as pressing the “scan” button on the printer opened documents in Photoshop on the Mac, just as I configured it to. Sending and receiving faxes, both from the computer and from the unit directly, worked as promised.

Aside from both wired and wireless printing options, the X9350 also includes card readers for just about every format of memory card imaginable: CompactFlash I and II, Memory Stick and Memory Stick Pro, SD Card, MultiMediaCard, Microdrive and xD Card. With adapters, you could also use Memory Stick Duo, Memory Stick Duo Pro, Mini SD and RS-MMC. Oh, and it also has PictBridge. Basically, if you can’t print from your camera to this printer, you’re not trying.

Australian Macworld’s buying advice. I was very pleased with the wireless performance of the X9350. Faxing isn’t a big thing for me, but I have to admit it makes a nice extra for communicating with those companies still stuck in the 20th century. Something that adds this degree of functionality, without adding to cable clutter, is definitely worth consideration. ☑



■ Type	Portable computer
■ Rating	★★★★
■ Pros	Fast performance; classic design; lovely screen; ample RAM and hard drive capacity
■ Cons	Performance glitch slows some tasks; no internal modem option; no PC Card slot; few cards available for ExpressCard/34 slot; no eSATA port
■ RRP	\$4399
■ Manufacturer	Apple Computer
■ Distributor	Apple Australia 133 622
■ Reviewer	Henry Norr
■ Hot links	www.apple.com/au/macbookpro

17-inch MacBook Pro Core 2 Duo/2.33 GHz

Beefed-up basics: speed, RAM, storage

WHEN it comes time to update its 17-inch laptops, Apple always faces a challenge: how to improve a machine that already has just about everything?

In the case of the latest 17-inch MacBook Pro, the company stuck to the basics: It added the latest and fastest Intel mobile processor available (a 2.33GHz Core 2 Duo, replacing the 2.16GHz Core Duo), doubled the standard memory (now 2GB), and boosted hard drive capacity (from 120GB to 160GB).


It also upped maximum RAM from 2GB to 3GB. The machine still has only two memory slots, though, so maxing out your memory involves replacing one of the normal 1GB modules with one that holds 2GB — an upgrade that will cost you a whopping \$930 if you have the system configured to order from Apple, and even more if you buy from a third-party supplier.

In every other respect, the new 17-inch model is just like its predecessor.

Altogether, the makeover is less substantial than the 15-inch MacBook Pros received when they moved up to the Core 2 Duo: the smaller members of the family also got a FireWire 800 port, faster graphics circuitry, and improved SuperDrives. Apple has a good excuse for not making similar changes to the 17-inch model, though: all the refinements in the latest 15-inch MacBook Pro models were already included in the original 17-inch model.

On the whole, the Core 2 Duo chip, with its 4MB of Level 2 cache memory shared between two processing engines, delivers a welcome, though not overwhelming, improvement in performance. Our testing, however, produced a surprising result: in some operations the new 17-inch MacBook Pro is slower than the 15-inch model configured with the same CPU and memory. Much of the problem involves a puzzling anomaly with ColorSync profiles in the Macworld Labs' iPhoto test images. However, the 17-inch model also lagged well behind its smaller sibling in the UnZip Archive test (and slightly behind in the Photoshop CS2 and Unreal Tournament tests).

While the issue is troubling, it doesn't affect most tasks; in general, the new 17-inch MacBook Pro is plenty speedy. In particular, graphics pros who have been hesitant about upgrading to an Intel-based model should note that the latest MacBook Pros handily outperform the fastest-ever G4-based PowerBook when running Adobe Photoshop CS2, even though the application has to run through Apple's Rosetta code-translation technology.

Australian Macworld's buying advice. We can think of a few new features we'd like to see in Apple's flagship laptop — an eSATA port for external drives, for example, and maybe a built-in reader for flash memory cards. Even without those improvements, however, the 17-inch MacBook Pro is a marvellous machine. If you can afford the price and don't mind the size and weight inevitably associated with such a large display, you won't be disappointed. 

Core 2 Duo benchmarks

	Speedmark 4.5 SUITE	Adobe Photoshop CS2 SUITE	Cinema 4D XL 9.5.21 RENDER	Compressor 2.3 MPEG2 Encode	iPhoto 6.0.5 IMPORT PHOTOS	Unreal Tournament 2004 AVERAGE FRAME RATE	Zip Archive 1GB FOLDER	UnZip Archive 1GB FILE
17-inch MacBook Pro Core 2 Duo/2.33GHz	211	1:12	0:57	2:02	2:55	72.6	2:18	1:34
17-inch MacBook Pro Core 2 Duo/2.33GHz (120GB drive)	218	1:11	0:57	2:07	1:21	72.4	2:24	1:33
15-inch MacBook Pro Core 2 Duo/2.16GHz (1GB RAM)	209	1:16	1:01	2:17	1:12	63.9	2:48	1:26
15-inch MacBook Pro Core 2 Duo/2.33GHz	226	1:10	0:57	2:07	1:10	72.9	2:22	1:19
15-inch MacBook Pro Core 2 Duo/2.33GHz (1GB RAM)	222	1:11	0:57	2:07	1:12	72.1	2:39	1:24
15-inch MacBook Pro Core Duo*/2.16GHz (1GB RAM)	190	1:40	1:06	3:02	1:51	59	2:37	1:17
MacBook Core 2 Duo/2GHz (White-1GB RAM)	178	1:25	1:14	2:41	1:15	17.8	2:53	1:40
15-inch PowerBook G4/1.67GHz (1GB RAM)	132	1:35	3:57	6:59	2:04	19.9	3:30	1:32
> Better	< Better	< Better	< Better	< Better	> Better	< Better	< Better	

Best results in red. Reference systems in italics. Asterisk (*) denotes system tested with optional 7,200-rpm hard drive.

Speedmark 4.5 scores are relative to those of a 1.25GHz Mac mini, which is assigned a score of 100. Adobe Photoshop, Cinema 4D XL, iMovie, iTunes, and Zip Archive scores are in minutes:seconds. All systems were running Mac OS X 10.4.8 with 2GB of RAM (except where indicated), with processor performance set to Highest in the Energy Saver preference pane when applicable. The Photoshop Suite test is a set of 14 scripted tasks using a 50MB file. Photoshop's memory was set to 70 percent and History was set to Minimum. We recorded how long it took to render a scene in Cinema4D. We used Compressor to encode a 6-minute/26-second DV file using the DVD: Fastest Encode 120 minutes - 4:3 setting. In iMovie, we applied the Aged video effect to a 1-minute movie. We imported 100 jpeg images from the hard drive into iPhoto's library. We converted 45 minutes of AAC audio files to MP3 using iTunes' High Quality setting. We used Unreal Tournament 2004's Antalus Botmatch average-frames-per-second score; we tested at a resolution of 1,024 by 768 pixels at the Maximum setting with both audio and graphics enabled. We created a Zip archive in the Finder from a 1GB folder and then Unzipped the same file. To compare Speedmark 4.5 scores for various Mac systems, visit our Apple Hardware Guide.—Macworld Lab testing by James Galbraith, Jerry Jung and Brian Chen

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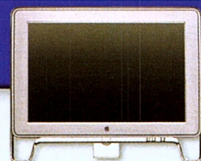
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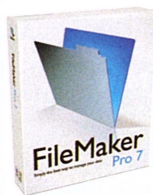
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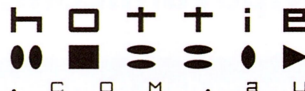
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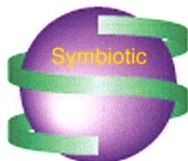
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Something to chew on.

By Alex Rieneck.

No indication

THE computer industry is a wonder of hyperbole. A veritable mine of poetic license and good old-fashioned snake oil. In fact, one gets the feeling that to be a true member of the digerati one should possess a pair of hip-high waders to get through the sea of "information" available to the consumers of what, after all, are meant to be products designed to make our lives simpler and — occasionally — more fun.

Take the field of computer gaming, for example — an area literally filled to the brim with thick, rich, high-quality hyperbole. Only in the recent "War on Terror" has hyperbole caused such vast expenditures of human time and cash, and caused such profound changes in the way that people deal with each other that the fabric of society itself can be seen to have irrevocably changed. The "War on Terror" is an enterprise wholly funded by governments and as such, it is duly reported in the media. On the other hand, the computer gaming industry is treated with kid gloves, and as a subject for slavish reviews of "how many millions of polygons per second" as opposed to anything to do with the reality that most people live in.

Think about this. Recently the media has been full of the fact that air travellers are severely restricted in the liquids that they can carry onto airplanes. There has been reporting, debate, fulminations and just about everyone involved in anything has been blamed, in print, for the whole world going to hell in a hand basket.

Now think about the last time you were in a car. Remember that idiot that suddenly changed lanes in front of you without indicating and caused you to brake suddenly? Remember how he and his brand new P plates vanished into the distance in front of you as he zipped in and out of lanes, like a psycho, only indicating about half the time and generally treating the road like a racetrack? Who is responsible for him?

Fair enough, at the time you probably loudly, and specifically blamed his parents and their pet dog, but who is really to blame? After all, when one of these "race drivers" actually manages to kill themselves (and perhaps a few other people) the media will usually describe it all as a tragedy and blame "excessive speed" — before getting some quality grief shots at the funeral and waiting for the next one. When the Columbine massacre happened the media briefly pushed the "computer-games-make-cold-blooded-killers" barrow, but so far it has been pretty much hands off the rather obvious idea that



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computer driving games help make young men even more stupid and dangerous than they usually are.

It's one of the great hyperboles of the computer age, after all, to call a computer car game a "driving simulation" when it patently is not. Where, after all, is the game where the player is told that what looked like a minor accident with a wall would cost five thousand dollars to fix? How about the game where the driver is told that he has lost the use of his legs, or has no teeth, or is the proud wearer of a spanking new colostomy bag? How about one where he is told that that van that he hilariously collided with, that cost him second place, had, say, nine four-year-old girls in it, and that he killed six of them?

It sort of detracts from the "hardcoreness" of it all doesn't it? So of course, that game doesn't exist, worse luck. Instead we have "simulations" that accurately "simulate" literally

every aspect of pouring tens of thousands of dollars into upgrading a virtual car and turning it into any variation of "street racing" machine, except for, of course, the need for real money or any attempt at conveying the real cost of that particular brand of dangerous stupidity.

Everything is accurately rendered, from specific real models of hubcaps through to the road handling characteristics of different

brands of rack-and-pinion steering.

From toddlerhood, children are given better and better simulations of roads without rules and with "real" cars on them, until, as soon as they are legal, they take to the roads in the dream machine they have probably been trained to crave since before they could talk — and they discover that they have nowhere very interesting to go, no matter how fast they can actually go to get there. So they go down the shops far too fast, and, if you are really lucky, they won't hit your car, or run over someone you care for. It's like a game. They are playing what they think is a simulation with the best-ever graphics, and you are playing roulette. They have a choice. You don't.

I suppose that it will all change when the oil runs out. Then some game can simulate the super-hybrid hydrogen car and everybody else can simulate a life by reading the paper and being told that there isn't a problem. That's what papers are, after all. News simulations. ☹

Alex Rieneck has been a technology commentator since the days of the bone abacus.



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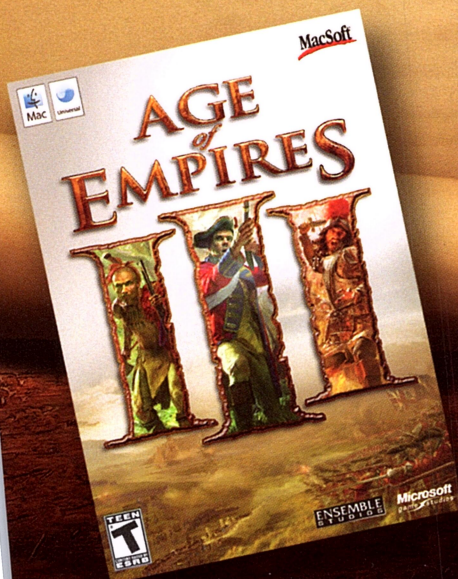
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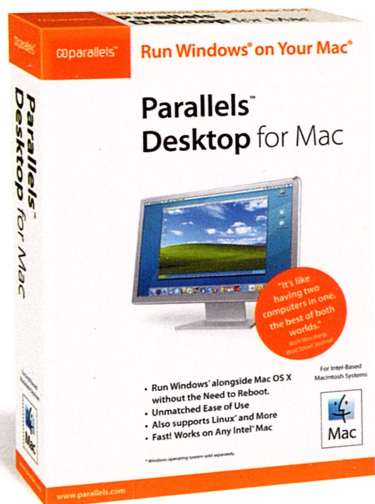
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